

# **THE COMMON SECURITY AND DEFENCE POLICY: NATIONAL PERSPECTIVES**

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# THE COMMON SECURITY AND DEFENCE POLICY: NATIONAL PERSPECTIVES

DANIEL FIOTT (ed.)



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Daniel FIOTT

# ACRONYMS

Armed Forces of Malta	AFM
Common Foreign and Security Policy	CFSP
Common Security and Defence Policy	CSDP
Community of Portuguese Speaking Countries	CPLP
Directorate-General Humanitarian Assistance	DG ECHO
Enhance and Enable Initiative	E2I
European Air Transport Command	EATC
European Communities	EC
European Defence Agency	EDA
European External Action Service	EEAS
European Gendarmerie Force	EUROGENDFOR
European Maritime Force	EUROMARFOR
European Security and Defence Policy	ESDP
European Security Strategy	ESS
European Union	EU
EU Advisory Mission for Civilian Security Sector Reform	EUAM
EU Border Assistance Mission	EUBAM
EU Force	EUFOR
EU Military Committee	EUMC
EU Military Staff	EUMS
EU Monitoring Mission	EUMM
EU Naval Force	EUNAVFOR
EU Satellite Centre	EU SATCEN
EU Training Mission	EUTM
Framework Nations Concept	FNC
Head Quarters	HQ
High Representative/Vice President	HR/VP
International Security Assistance Force	ISAF
Intelligence, Surveillance, Target Acquisition and Reconnaissance	ISTAR
“Islamic State”	ISIL/ISIS
Kosovo Force	KFOR
Letter of Intent	LoI
Lockheed Martin Joint Strike Fighter II	F-35
Middle East and North Africa	MENA
Ministry of Defence (UK)	MoD
Nordic Defence Cooperation	NORDEF



North Atlantic Treaty Organisation	NATO
Operational Headquarters	OHQ
Organisation for Joint Armament Cooperation	OCCAR
Partnership for Peace	PfP
Permanent Structured Cooperation	PESCO
Political and Security Committee	PSC
Treaty on European Union	TEU
United Kingdom	UK
United Nations	UN
United States	US
Western European Union	WEU



## FOREWORD

When one looks at the present state of the CSDP, one cannot help but look on with disenchantment at the energy that appears to have abandoned both institutions and Member States. Commentators increasingly take for granted that nothing much should be expected from this field of EU policy.

The reasons for this state of mind are well known: the recent economic and financial strains, which have impacted all EU action since 2008, means that most of the Member States will struggle to keep their defence budgets at their present level in the future, and we may even see reductions. Furthermore, and to put it mildly, most of the recent CSDP operations have also experienced a lack of enthusiasm. Adding to this overall trend, the EU is far from presenting a common vision of what security and defence should really mean. Many of the Member States do not want to be involved in all of today's international turmoils, and they rarely share the strategic culture which inspires those Member States who see themselves as having special responsibilities in dealing with these crises. In the end it may be that Member States diverge fundamentally on the simple question of whether it is relevant for the EU to engage in most of the 'hot' crises Europe faces; many prefer to see Europe as a soft power, mostly dedicated to intervening on less dramatic fronts and more inclined to mend than to fight. For whatever reason given, it remains that if there is a lack of common understanding on what CSDP should really be about, it should not come as a surprise if this policy is presently in stalemate.

As an additional blow, the Ukrainian crisis, which dragged on for the whole of last year, could only add to the downward spiral the EU has been experiencing, with a new Russia aggressively confronting Europe in a manner not too distant from the Cold War days. This attitude has triggered the natural reaction among EU Member States to seek reassurances from NATO about their own national security. Coupled with the return of France a few years ago into the integrated military command, NATO's renewed relevance has sent a strong message to Europe about the military organisation's credibility with regard to collective defence.

Surprisingly, this overall trend was gathering momentum at the same time as other more positive developments. The European Council of December 2013 dedicated its main session to CSDP: it underlined Europe's role as a 'security provider' while adopting a very ambitious road map for Europe in all possible dimensions of the security sector. Hence the impression of a genuine boost to all EU institutions, which have been invited to join efforts and give CSDP a reinvigorated efficiency. In the same way, the increasing instability in Europe's neighbourhood has also called for more EU operations: most recently in Iraq, Libya, Northern Nigeria or South Sudan. Pressure for further EU engagement has been one of the most constant features of the discussions taking place around these crises. Moreover, a growing number of EU partners

in Asia, Latin America or Eastern Europe have shown a renewed eagerness to join CSDP missions in what sounds like a vote of confidence for EU capacities.

What kind of conclusion should be drawn from this contradictory situation? Probably that the EU has much more potential than it can sometimes figure out itself, if only it would be ready to adapt to the new global realities. But, more than anything else, an enhanced CSDP needs from all Member States strong political will and a clear vision of what they want this policy to be. Without this indispensable ingredient CSDP may continue to run its course, as it does today. It may even grow in efficiency but it will keep lacking the one resource that would definitely help it overcome all the present shortcomings that have prevented Europe from finding its true role and mission through the CSDP.

Member States remain central to EU security and defence policy. This is why this collection of essays is so valuable for assessing in no uncertain way the long road that lies ahead for any progress to be made.

Pierre VIMONT

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# INTRODUCTION:

## THE CSDP IS DEAD, LONG LIVE THE CSDP?

Daniel FIOTT

It seems that ever since the infamous St. Malo summit between France and the UK in 1998 Europeans have been sorely disappointed with, or even deluded by, the EU's CSDP. Far from the ambitions that followed the implosion of Yugoslavia, the CSDP has seemingly tapered-off into niche areas that are more concerned with training and police missions, or with security more broadly (rather than defence). In 2008 the EU deployed 3,700 military personnel to Chad; in 2012 it deployed 37 civilian experts to Juba International Airport in South Sudan. Surely something is sorely amiss. Civilian missions have their place but they point to the fact that Europeans – with the exception of France perhaps – have perhaps never seriously believed that the CSDP could serve as the basis for the EU's hard power.

'NATO is dead, long live NATO!'. With the economic exuberance of the 1990s and early 2000s, and the absence of any territorial threat, the Alliance was left to deal with Afghanistan. Yet, the core task of NATO has always been territorial defence. Putin has ensured this fact remains true today and, paradoxically, he has perhaps simultaneously brought about the swift felling of any hopes that the CSDP may one day provide for a *l'Europe de défense*. Important questions are being asked of Europeans both within NATO and the CSDP, yet Europeans appear to be drifting towards an *l'Europe sans défense*. Regardless of whether Europeans want to devote their energies to CSDP or NATO, any serious pledge to either or both entities will require far more political commitment than is present now.

### **Are we heading towards a *l'Europe sans défense*?**

There is no real point in reeling off decreasing defence expenditure<sup>1</sup> levels here as they are well-known. It is, however, rather more important to understand how the member states view the CSDP. France, for example, was originally the bulwark of autonomous European defence but its recent insistence on a pragmatic approach to CSDP and its reluctance to ultimately work militarily through the CSDP in Libya, Mali and the Central African Republic is indicative of a growing ambivalence towards the Policy. France cannot be blamed for its impatience with the CSDP, as most of the other EU member states have been dragging their feet for some time. And if France

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<sup>1</sup> Fiott, D. (2013) "'A Numbers Game': The Council Summit on Defence", European Geostrategy, (3 Dec). See: <http://www.europeangeostrategy.org/2013/12/state-defence-europe-numbers-game/>.

is growing weary of CSDP, should we really be surprised that the Policy has stalled? This is not to even speak of the British position.

Perhaps we have got it all wrong though. Perhaps CSDP was never really designed to bring about a *l'Europe de defense*. Could it not equally be all about institutional politics and national interests? Indeed, much energy has been expended on ensuring that the EU puts in place a 'comprehensive approach' to its foreign policy (the myth here is, of course, that all foreign policy should be comprehensive). Yet this 'approach' has tended to result in self-serving political in-fighting over institutional design and territory, and ensuring that the tools the EU does use (whether soft or hard) largely complement member state interests. The British and Germans may want a softer CSDP but for very different reasons – for the UK a civilian approach asserts NATO's primacy, for Germany such an approach avoids difficult questions about the use of military force.

Ambition has always been central to the CSDP. Let national and institutional politics get in the way and you are left with relatively small missions that barely make a dent in serious security and defence issues (e.g. EUTM Mali). If the CSDP cannot be wielded to deal with key politico-military issues in the EU's immediate geographical spheres of interest, then talk of the EU 'pivoting' to Asia or playing a global role appear rightfully ludicrous. Perhaps these views are, however, overly negative. Maybe there is still some life left in the CSDP. Yet ascertaining how the member states now view the CSDP is challenging, and it is to the member states that one must look to if one is to answer a critical question: is the CSDP still relevant?

### **Maybe there is still some life left in the CSDP...**

In the spirit of constructively finding an answer to this question, from November 2014 to March 2015 the editor of this volume ran a series on the blog European Geostrategy where key experts were invited to share their (national) views on the state of the CSDP. Each of the commissioned articles was broadly structured so as to answer a number of central questions. Why, if at all, is the CSDP still important to the member states? How does CSDP help member states meet their national interests? What more could the member states do to further strength civil/military capability development within the CSDP? What mechanisms (e.g. permanent structured cooperation) could work to enable closer cooperation through CSDP? What do the member states think should become of the CSDP? Should it be a military alliance on a par with NATO or should it focus exclusively on civilian missions? What do the member states see as the main drivers and obstacles behind a more effective CSDP?

The collection of articles found in this publication is a reflection of the debate hosted on European Geostrategy. While each author writes in their personal capacity, they come from different professional backgrounds – serving and retired military

personnel, policy-makers, academics and, of course, think tankers – which only strengthens the focus and reach of the contributions. I have decided to organise this volume into five parts.

Part one – the “Lynchpins” – contains British, French and German perspectives. As the reader will discover, the word “lynchpins” is used liberally and not without a hint of irony in some cases. Part two – the “Believers” – includes essays from Belgium, Italy and Spain. Again, the reader will see that the word “believer” should be approached with a degree of healthy skepticism. Some countries, such as Belgium, have an ambitious agenda for CSDP but increasingly lack the resources to play a role; whereas the contributions from Spain and Italy show, in certain cases, a growing degree of impatience and disappointment. Part three – the “Undecided” – collates contributions from those countries that overwhelmingly see NATO as the main focus for defence in Europe and/or have certain reservations about engaging fully with CSDP. Part four – “the outsiders” – contains contributions from Malta and Denmark. Finally, part five – “The Future of CSDP” – offers the readers some reflections on the broader political issues effecting the development of the CSDP.

# THE “LYNCHPINS”

# THE UNITED KINGDOM AND THE CSDP

Nick WITNEY

All European countries are prisoners of their past – none more so than the UK. It is now more than half a century since US Secretary of State Dean Acheson famously remarked that ‘Great Britain has lost an empire and has not yet found a role’. Yet British elites still find it hard to reconcile themselves to the modern world – a world in which British power and British influence are in secular decline.

To the extent that this reality cannot be ignored, the reaction is too often to take refuge in fantasy (the Europhobes’ trope about becoming a ‘northern Singapore’), or a sulky emulation of Greta Garbo’s renunciation of the world: ‘I want to be alone’. Too few British leaders have the courage to urge the only rational response to our diminishing national ability to shape the world around us – closer cooperation with European partners. For cooperation – with all the commitments, compromises and constraints it inevitably entails – feels deeply un-British. We, after all, are a Great Power, and great powers should be able to plough their own furrow.

So even at the point when Britain was most supportive of the European ‘defence project’, after the St. Malo initiative with France in 1998, the British idea was more to lead than to participate. If various continentals got together and compensated for individual weakness by working together, then that was fine. But the UK itself would of course have no need to resort to such shifts.

This British instinct – to prescribe defence cooperation for others whilst quietly abstaining – was of course reinforced by the initial American suspicion of European defence initiatives. London was deeply anxious not to incur Washington’s displeasure; American approbation was, and for many in the British defence establishment still remains, a vital prop to tottering British self-esteem. (This craving to look good in US eyes was a big part of what led to the British humiliations in Iraq and Afghanistan.) So, back in the late 1990s, the British promised Washington that they would control EU defence developments, to ensure the continuing primacy of NATO. The remnants of this policy can be seen in the continuing British veto, in isolation and in defiance of all logic and experience, of a proper EU headquarters.

All these British reservations about European defence have more recently been compounded by the rising toxicity of the ‘E-word’ in domestic politics. In the lead-up to this May’s general election, neither of the two main UK political parties (Conservatives and Labour) will do anything, however sensible, which could open them to the charge of pro-Europeanism. If the Conservatives win, this paralysis will continue at least until the referendum on Britain’s continued membership of the EU which they



have promised. But if the pundits are right the election will deliver neither a clear winner nor a stable government – which will have the same effect.

One day, it is not unreasonable to hope that Britain will again have a national leader who is prepared to argue that European cooperation, far from violating national sovereignty (the power to control our own destinies), is in fact the only way to protect it. And further to argue that for Britain to take a leading role in European defence cooperation is a winning policy from every possible perspective (including, for example, the transatlantic relationship). But European partners should not hold their breaths. The British are trapped in a crisis of post-imperial national identity, and show no signs of emerging any time soon.

# THE CSDP WITHOUT THE UK: BAD FOR EUROPE BUT EVEN WORSE FOR BRITAIN

Jolyon HOWORTH

Experts are often asked: could the EU develop a robust security and defence capacity without the UK? The answer comes in two parts. The first is that the CSDP without the UK would be a pale shadow of what it might be if the UK were fully involved. The second, however, is that, because the European defence and security project arises out of the movement of history's tectonic plates, CSDP would have no alternative but to continue to develop, even without the UK. By the same token, the UK, because it is a significant defence player geographically situated in Europe, would have no alternative but to continue to have some sort of relationship with the CSDP. This might involve the negotiation of a special status for the UK (similar to that of Turkey?) within the European security project. But whatever the precise nature of such an arrangement, the UK would clearly henceforth wield significantly less clout in CSDP than it has to date. There would be a serious cost to pay in terms of the UK's influence over this crucial policy area.

Some in the UK may nevertheless, for one reason or another, and despite the cost, welcome their country's adoption of a more arms-length relationship with the CSDP. They might be tempted to think that Britain, once outside the integrated structures of the EU, would be in a good position to prioritise and leverage its bilateral relationship with both the US and France. This would be an illusion. The US has consistently pressured the UK to become a full and active participant in all EU policy areas, including defence and security. That was one fundamental reason why Tony Blair went to Saint-Malo. If the UK found itself outside the EU, what could it offer the US in terms of security and defence? Apart from a traditional role in the NATO, which would in any case become more complicated in the hypothesis of a British stand off with the CSDP, the UK might be tempted to respond to various recent American invitations to EU member states to accompany the US in its 'tilt to Asia'.

Yet, in the context of the current draconian cuts in the UK's defence budget, it would make no sense whatsoever for Britain to relocate its strategic profile to the Asia-Pacific region. Nor would there be any reason for the US to welcome such a shift. Seen from Washington, the UK's contribution to collective security only makes sense if centred on Europe. Furthermore, if the UK were to emerge as a kind of 'large Singapore' off the coast of mainland Europe, America's strategic interest in such an actor would wane significantly. On the other hand, the evolving EU with its CSDP project would continue to feature as the US's primary strategic partner in the greater European theatre, however relative the US interest in European security might be in

the context of Washington's other global priorities. It is difficult to imagine how the US would interpret a hypothetical 'Brexit' in any way other than extremely negatively.

The same would be true of any hypothetical 'post-Brexit' UK special defence relationship with France. The 2010 Franco-British Defence Treaty has already begun to demonstrate its fragilities. The unilateral, cost-driven UK decision to opt for vertical take-off F-35B aircraft to equip its sole aircraft carrier means that French Rafale aircraft will not be able to land on the British vessel, thus severely undermining the two countries' plan to have an integrated carrier capability. François Hollande has proven less interested in a privileged security relationship with the UK than his predecessor Nicolas Sarkozy.

But above all, France will continue, as it has throughout, to give pride of place to the development of a viable EU security and defence capability, and the absence of the UK will undoubtedly lead to ever closer security and defence cooperation between France and Germany (however fraught with problems programmatically and strategically), and, beyond that, with the Weimar group (France, Germany and Poland) supplemented by Italy and Spain. It would be very difficult for France to find a justification for establishing a privileged partnership with a 'post-Brexit' UK that looked fixedly across the Atlantic rather than across the Channel. Britain, in short, would have lost its main security anchor and failed to find any acceptable alternative. This would be all the more serious for London in that NATO, post-Afghanistan, is likely to become a very different type of actor.

If the UK were to find itself outside the formal structures of the European Union, its central role in the development of an effective and robust security and defence policy, both via NATO and via CSDP would be massively diminished. It is highly likely that the necessary recalibration of the relationship between CSDP and NATO would take place with Paris, Berlin and Washington as active players and the UK as an increasingly bemused onlooker. A sad fate indeed for the country that has always prided itself on being the foremost military player in Europe and the guardian of the transatlantic relationship.

# THE IMPERATIVE FOR BRITISH LEADERSHIP ON POOLING AND SHARING

Tom DYSON

European defence budgets face a context of long-term fiscal austerity. At the same time, European states are facing an intensity of security challenges unprecedented since the fall of the Soviet Union, including the resurgence of Russia and instability in the Middle East and Africa. In the context of the 'Asia pivot' in US defence and security policy these challenges will necessitate increased European burden-sharing within NATO as well as the development of greater European military autonomy from the US through the EU's CSDP. This fiscal and strategic environment creates a clear imperative for all European militaries to consider how to enhance efficiency in defence spending by pooling and sharing capabilities. However, the EU's Ghent Framework and NATO's Smart Defence have made only limited progress in fostering greater specialisation by national militaries. Where substantial cooperation has occurred, it has taken place on a bi-lateral basis, such as the 2010 Anglo-French Lancaster House Treaties and 2014 Anglo-French Brize-Norton Summit. The downsides of bi-lateralism are evident in the outcomes of defence cuts in Europe which, in the absence of multilateral coordination, are largely leading to specialisation by 'default' rather than 'design'.<sup>2</sup>

Britain has traditionally viewed the development of high-end capabilities within the CSDP as anathema, preferring instead to leave higher-intensity operations to NATO. Nevertheless, under the Labour Government (1997-2010) British policy toward the CSDP adopted a broadly pragmatic approach that sought to find common ground with European states, such as France, which sought greater autonomy from the Atlantic Alliance. Indeed, Britain was a central actor in the development of key CSDP initiatives such as the 1998 St Malo Accord and the 2003 EU Battlegroups Initiative. However, the British approach to CSDP under the Conservative-Liberal coalition (2010-present) has become less willing to countenance any measures which may challenge the centrality of NATO to European defence. Hence the United Kingdom (UK) has failed to make use of the opportunities that the EU affords to identify and overcome European capability shortfalls. The urgency of the challenges of austerity and the contemporary security environment now require a return to a more pragmatic approach by the UK that recognises the opportunities for complementarity between the Ghent Framework and Smart Defence.

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<sup>2</sup> Major, C. and Mölling, C. (2013) 'Synergies between EU and NATO? Specialisation as the Litmus Test for "Smart Defence" and "Pooling and Sharing"', *Fondation pour la recherche stratégique*, note no. 12/13.

The June 2015 European Council provides an excellent opportunity for Britain to reclaim its leadership role in European defence and promote greater military specialisation 'by design'. The first priority of the UK must be to champion the establishment of a European defence review commission. As Nick Witney has highlighted, such a commission must not only re-examine the European Security Strategy that was last updated in 2008, but also the capabilities needed to implement strategy.<sup>3</sup> The ensuing dialogue about European interests and longer-term defence planning will help to decrease the level of uncertainty about the intentions of European states and permit greater coordination of defence cuts.

In addition, the June 2015 European Council must form a turning point in Britain's relationship with the European Defence Agency. For too long Britain has undermined the work of the EDA by seeking to limit its budget and by pursuing bi-lateral cooperation outside its institutional structures. Britain should use the European Council to outline its intentions for leadership on greater use of the EDA as a means to coordinate specialisation with both large (France and Germany) and smaller European states and to establish clear, coordinated goals for armaments procurement and troop numbers with other European nations. The sacrifice of a loss of British military autonomy could be minimised by building in redundancies to ensure that a military operation could proceed, should one or more European nations be unable to contribute.

A small reduction in national strategic autonomy is favourable to the far greater loss in British power and influence that will ensue if Britain fails to encourage its European partners to coordinate their defence cuts. A consensus amongst the 'Weimar Five' about the need for a renewed impetus behind CSDP pooling and sharing initiatives has emerged in recent years. Furthermore, British leadership on pooling and sharing under CSDP would ultimately be welcomed in Washington as it would enhance Europe's effectiveness in dealing with security challenges within its geopolitical neighbourhood and create capability synergies which would also be of use to NATO. Within such a facilitative context, British leadership on CSDP would be transformative for European defence.

The re-emergence of British leadership on CSDP will, however, depend on the outcome of the May 2015 UK general election. Should one party emerge with a workable majority, a window of opportunity will emerge to allow British CSDP policy to be driven by its strategic interests rather than the insularity of the UK Independence Party and Tory backbenchers. The 2015 Strategic Defence and Security Review which will follow shortly after the general election would then provide an ideal opportunity to integrate 'specialisation by design' into British and European defence policy.

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<sup>3</sup> Witney, N. (2011) 'How to Stop the De-militarisation of Europe', *European Council on Foreign Relations* No. 40: p. 9.

# EUROPEAN DEFENCE, THE CSDP AND THE UK: TWO CASES OF CATCH-22

Simon J. SMITH

I recently asked a very highly regarded US academic their thoughts on the current state of European defence. The reply was concise and astute: 'Spend as little as possible whenever possible while always attempting to prop up national defence industries. If you are one of the major European powers (emphasis and satire mine), then strive not to have too much less than any other equivalent power. As for France and the UK, try to retain at least some overseas intervention capability for old time's sake. Always try to placate the Americans while maximising all of the above; i.e. try to preserve at least one brigade and one fighter squadron you can send to war and keep there for a very long time if necessary.'

This retort was in relation to Europe in general and not the EU's CSDP or NATO *per se*. Yet, since both of these instruments of collective defence and security rely on the same sets of armed forces, this reality affects the tools of both dramatically. When it comes to defence spending, unfortunately, there are only two options facing European states and let us face it, what we are really talking about is managed decline relative to other emerging powers. Or as the *Financial Times* recently put it, 'we are growing older [...] and the less we grow, the more we squabble over budgets'.<sup>4</sup>

What we are really talking about is managed decline relative to other emerging powers. So in this era of low growth, the first case of Catch-22 is this. European politicians (UK included) can either spend more on defence by increasing the national debt (and also risk the wrath of their publics who are not persuaded) and precipitate further decline. Alternatively, they can opt not to invest more on defence and actually precipitate decline even faster. Given that we are replete with the more short-term needs of politicians and not the long-term visions of statesmen, the second option is clearly winning.

Attempts to try and muddle through this gloomy environment are ubiquitous. Two obvious examples were the outcomes of both the long anticipated EU Summit on defence in December of 2013 and the communiqué resulting from the NATO Summit in Wales last September. The former saw an agreement to 'deepen defence co-operation', but with France, Germany and the UK disagreeing on how best to

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<sup>4</sup> Luce, E. (2014) 'Is the West clinically depressed?', *Financial Times*, (21 Dec). See: <http://www.ft.com/intl/cms/s/0/e6fa9024-86b6-11e4-9c2d-00144feabdc0.html#axzz3SgYXnDsE>.

achieve these goals.<sup>5</sup> The latter gave us a declaration whereby Allies will 'aim to move towards the existing NATO guideline of spending 2% of GDP on defence within a decade'.<sup>6</sup> As a colleague recently put it, this agreement was a veritable caveat soup and not worth the paper it was printed on. One obvious answer to reduced defence budgets in Europe is the EU's Pooling and Sharing programme, as Tom Dyson has argued effectively in this volume.<sup>7</sup> However, the impression held by many officials in the UK is that these programmes were 'dead at birth'.<sup>8</sup>

A second change in the environment is that the US is now looking to Europe and saying, we no longer care if it is in the EU or NATO but please invest in your armed forces. There now seems to be a genuine US desire for the Europeans, especially the bigger states, to organise themselves either in NATO or in the EU or both. Although, the fact that the last NATO Secretary General was from a CSDP opt-out nation (Denmark) and the current Secretary General is from a non-EU nation (Norway) does suggest there may still be a degree of US ambivalence towards CSDP.

The UK's original impetus for backing CSDP (or ESDP as it was then known) was to preserve US commitment to NATO by hopefully inspiring its other European partners to invest more in their own defence structures. This goal is perceived in London to have failed. At the same time, and as Sven Biscop has pointed out, the UK is now much more dependent on its European Allies given the US rebalance to Asia and the subsequent uncertainty of its commitment to some aspects of European security.<sup>9</sup> To put it another way, unless the big European players organise themselves collectively, there will be no substitute to the heavy doctrinal intellectual presence that used to come from the Americans through NATO. However, the UK certainly does not think the replacement of US leadership through any European caucus in NATO or through CSDP is imminent. They certainly do not believe that there will be a concerted effort across Europe to invest in robust military capabilities; this is proving difficult even at home.

It is no secret that the UK has for some time believed 'many European countries would never become credible military partners and that CSDP was therefore not worth their time'. Moreover their position has been that, with some exception, CSDP 'operations did not support the UK's strategic interests'. Although not a CSDP mission itself, this UK position has only been strengthened since the Libya campaign with the refusal of some, most notably Germany, to play a role in the operation.

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<sup>5</sup> Rettmann, A. (2013) 'France, Germany and UK show discord on EU defence', *EUObserver*, (20 Dec). See: <https://euobserver.com/defence/122570>.

<sup>6</sup> NATO (2014) 'Wales Summit Declaration'. See: [http://www.nato.int/cps/po/natohq/official\\_texts\\_112964.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/po/natohq/official_texts_112964.htm).

<sup>7</sup> See Tom Dyson's contribution in this volume.

<sup>8</sup> CSIS (2014) 'After the Scottish Referendum: What are the Future Transatlantic Security Implications?'. See: <http://csis.org/event/after-scottish-referendum-what-are-future-transatlantic-security-implications>.

<sup>9</sup> Biscop, S. (2012) 'The UK and European Defence: Leading or Leaving?', *International Affairs*, Vol. 88, No. 6: pp. 1297-1313.

Therefore, austerity, US geopolitical shifts, and the perceived lack in credibility of most of its European partners have all pushed the UK towards bilateral security cooperation with the French and not towards investing time or resources in CSDP.

The primary conviction of the UK is that the appropriate role for CSDP is in the broader cooperational approach, otherwise known as the comprehensive approach. This does not mean that the CSDP should not or cannot do sharp end military operations such as Atalanta, which incidentally UK MoD officials will also tell you (off the record) is a much better resourced mission than Ocean Shield. However, they will also make the point that this EU flagship military operation has been effectively run out of a national HQ and, therefore, no CSDP standing Operational Headquarters is needed.

The UK has been sceptical of proposals to build an autonomous CSDP OHQ and has even gone as far as blocking such proposals. The UK answer is always: 'we do not need one and there are plenty of military OHQs already in place in Europe'. They will also say, 'what type of military mission is so big that it cannot be managed by a national HQ?' Or if it were, then NATO would most likely be involved anyway. Yet, this misses the need for CSDP to be able to do proper operational planning before a large crisis, especially combined civ-mil planning.

Of course, what UK officials are really sceptical of is finding the necessary political will or capacity in Europe to fund, man and use such a sizable OHQ. It is very hard to get member states to invest in capabilities at all, never mind for CSDP. The nations all ask, how much will it cost us if they get used? How will it help our nation?

If the UK looks to its partners and only sees an ambition to spend as little as possible on defence coupled with the declining will to engage in military operations generally, why should they think it in their best interest to fund two collective OHQs in Europe? They are too big to man and too costly to run, especially at a time when Europe's reducing its defence budgets almost across the board. Furthermore, they believe that most of the MoDs and treasuries across Europe tend to agree with them sotto voce on this, despite the UK's seemingly political isolation on the issue.

So case two of the Catch-22 is this, the UK can try to become a leader in developing CSDP assets and capabilities, while risking more of its own scarce resources, in the hope that Europe will invest more in its own defence and security. Or it can take the position that there will be no genuine foreseeable replacement to US leadership and just accept this vacuum while trying to ride out the benefits of the 'special relationship' for as long as it can. Ultimately, the UK should assume a leadership role in CSDP and continue to get as much out of their European partners as they possibly can. But until Europeans start to significantly reinvest in their defence and security generally, this sceptical island will continue to see investment in CSDP as putting the cart before the horse.



# FRANCE STEERS AWAY FROM THE CSDP

Benoît GOMIS

Since the end of the colonial era, France has often seen the EU as a power multiplier, as Adrian Treacher and others have pointed out.<sup>10</sup> When Tony Blair and Jacques Chirac signed the St Malo declaration in 1998, thereby giving birth to the European Security and Defence Policy, their motivations and objectives differed. Following crises in the Balkans and Rwanda, the UK was keen to show the US that Europe could be relied upon to take on a larger share of the global security burden. On the other hand, France saw ESDP as a way to increase the country's influence in the world, and its independence from the US.

Things have changed. The now-named CSDP remains an official objective of French defence policy, but a much less central and urgent one than it once was. As Olivier de France rightly points out, France is now more willing to stay away from ideological and institutional debates, and act independently, in an incremental, pragmatic, and capability-focused manner.<sup>11</sup> This is the result of a number of significant developments, including the following four:

*First:* France's reintegration into NATO's integrated command structure in 2009 and the country's numerous military deployments in recent years have pulled the French military away from the EU and CSDP. Recent disagreements between the French armed forces and the *Élysée* over the government's willingness to introduce a European component in the military mission in Central African Republic confirm this trend.

*Second:* France has relied on more simple and effective partnerships with the UK, with whom it signed bilateral defence and security cooperation treaties outside of the EU framework in November 2010, and the US, a key military ally in Mali, Libya and in operations across the Sahel.

*Third:* The CSDP's own weaknesses and limits so far. Few significant results have been produced since St. Malo; strategic differences between EU member states have become increasingly obvious; the Eurozone crisis has had a powerful negative impact, both on the EU's self-confidence and in capability terms, while European countries have also increasingly focused on economic and internal issues as a result.

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<sup>10</sup> Treacher, A. (2001) 'Europe as a Power Multiplier for French Security Policy: Strategic Consistency, Tactical Adaptation', *European Security*, Vol. 10, No. 1: pp. 22-44.

<sup>11</sup> See Olivier de France's contribution in this volume.

*Fourth:* Germany has been another key factor in France's change in posture: Germany's already dominant position within the EU, and its persistent uneasiness with the use of military force have meant that recent French efforts to revive Franco-German and European defence cooperation have produced few results, and have pushed France further away from CSDP. The 2011 letter of intent on military capability development between the two countries constituted more of a political and symbolic declaration than a plan with much substance. While the European Council on Defence of December 2013 produced ambitious plans, delivering on them has proved problematic.

In this context, France is now focusing on more realistic outcomes for CSDP, seeing it as a complementary force focusing on tasks such as training, equipment, and advice as part of the EU's comprehensive approach. This is arguably a wise and clear departure from the traditional ambitious French position on the EU as a potential military alter ego – with a broader range of tools – to NATO. France was one of the key forces behind the creation of Permanent Structured Cooperation, a key tenant of CSDP. However, the two countries favour it less today, having chosen to go on a similar yet bilateral path with the Lancaster House treaties and hoping this will lead to more clusters of defence cooperation across Europe. While UK-French cooperation has had its fair share of challenges since November 2010, it is realistically more likely to produce positive outcomes than a broader, more cumbersome European initiative.

As a result, France is likely to continue favouring close defence and security cooperation with the UK, with which it shares interests, objectives, military capacity and willingness to deploy it, and the US, over yet another revival of "*L'Europe de la défense*".

# FRANCE AND THE CSDP: A TIN OF PAINT AND A CAN OF WORMS

Olivier DE FRANCE

At the end of the 1990s, a British manufacturer named Ronseal rose to fame for claiming in an advert that its wood-dye ‘did exactly what it says on the tin’. At roughly the same time, a nascent common policy in the area of defence was being set up in Europe – which ultimately blossomed into what is presently known as Europe’s Common Security and Defence Policy. Alone almost in Europe, France upholds today a sufficient degree of interest, expectation, ambition and wherewithal to have the CSDP ‘do what it says on the tin’.

France believes that a Common Security and Defence Policy should have to do with security and defence. It also believes that CSDP should be a policy for Europeans to do things together in these two areas. In contrast, most of its European partners either do not, or cannot. Germany can but will not, despite some recent encouraging noises coming from Berlin and Munich.<sup>12</sup> Belgium does, but cannot – and is planning to cut its defence budget by 10%, barely two months after pledging the opposite at the NATO Summit in Newport.<sup>13</sup> The UK has entered a different mental universe altogether with the forthcoming 2015 general election in May – the very mention of Europe is fraught, never mind in a phrase that includes the word defence.<sup>14</sup> Most other European countries simply delegate their strategic thinking, security policy and defence procurement to the United States.

France’s defence policy is still built from the ground up on the opposite assumption. It aims to guarantee that France’s capacity to make autonomous decisions based on independent intelligence, and the country’s capacity to act of its own accord – if need be by entering an operational theatre on its own. This commitment stems from the global role that France considers it still ought to play in the international arena. With French power on the wane, the CSDP is seen as one of the channels and vectors of this global role.

How such ambitions translate into reality is at times less obvious. Despite repeated assaults from the Ministry of Finance, the French defence budget has held up quite well to date. The latest military programming law (2014-19) somehow managed to square the circle and avoid any irreversible choices. It may even yet be abided by, which would certainly be a first. But the commitment to maintaining a full-spectrum

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<sup>12</sup> See Falk Tettweiler’s contribution in this volume.

<sup>13</sup> See Sven Biscop’s contribution on Belgium in this volume.

<sup>14</sup> See Tom Dyson’s contribution in this volume.

force is wearing dangerously thin. The latest French White Paper, by ultimately choosing not to choose, may have compounded the issue.

In parallel, France has invested time and energy over the past few years into CSDP, with varying degrees of success. They French tried, and mostly failed, to get the European Security Strategy updated in 2008, put forth a number of institutional proposals in 2011 with other Weimar countries (Germany and Poland), and were active in the run-up to the 2013 December European Council on defence. France has learnt lessons from these precedents and has recently avoided expending energy in strategic or institutional debates that are not likely to garner any consensus, especially from across the Channel. In fact, it has paradoxically adopted a rather Anglo-Saxon approach in recent times: incremental, pragmatic, and very much focused on capabilities.

However there is still one crippling ill that besets the French perspective on CSDP: France has yet to genuinely realise that other European countries may not necessarily see things in quite the same way. In particular, that not all countries want a *Europe puissance*, nor even have a proper translation for what *Europe de la défense* means in the French mental universe. When countries do have roughly the same idea as France does of what CSDP should be, like Poland, chances are they will have a fairly strong – and different – opinion of what it should look like. Both countries see eye to eye on the fact that the CSDP should do what it says on the tin – i.e. defence and security. But under the tin, France will look south when Poland will look east. This is usually when the tin of paint becomes a can of worms. Europeans put what they will under the label CSDP – different expectations, perceptions, preoccupations and ambitions – which French policy has as yet neither truly accepted nor internalised.

This shows through when France, instead of investing precious political capital in consensus-building before deploying African operations, insists on telling its European partners they are ‘freeriding’ on French security efforts in the Sahel. After some finger-pointing, it usually ends up going cap in hand to Brussels to ask for funding for its African endeavours, and then tries to build consensus *a posteriori*. This is not necessarily the best way to go about it.

France’s work in the Sahel is crucially important for Europe – terrorism and migration are clearly issues that affect Europe as a whole, and not one of its member states. But by acting as it does, it gives off the impression that it is bullying the smaller countries into buying into the French position. In short, that CSDP is common, as long as it is common along French lines. The state of the current ‘European’ effort in the Central African Republic shows the limits of such policy. The issue with the French vision of CSDP is therefore not with security or with defence. It is with how France can let CSDP exist as a genuinely common policy, the way it says so on the tin.

# GERMANY AND THE CSDP

Hilmar LINNENKAMP

The Common Security and Defence Policy, no less than the Common Foreign and Security Policy, has been and still is an essential component of German foreign policy. It is its defining environment. There is no German foreign and defence policy separated from its European context. Classical notions of 'national interest' do not convince the German citizen as much as the idea of a European Germany – a famous term coined by Thomas Mann in 1953 as the alternative to a German Europe.

Civil/military capability development does not actually figure high on the German foreign policy agenda. Whilst there is a long tradition of humanitarian and disaster relief operations executed by *Bundeswehr* forces – until as late as 1994 all military deployments abroad were of that nature – the typical assets needed in such contingencies are not being emphasised according to their possible significance for civilian missions. Germany could do more in keeping transport means, communication systems, engineer or medical capacities available and ready for employment and deployment abroad. As a matter of fact, these capabilities are also in high demand for military coalition operations as they are critical enablers in war and almost always in short supply. Of course they need to be well integrated in command structures – military as well as civilian – and must therefore form part of organisational structures designed for a wide range of crisis management operations. A paradigmatic case could be the transformation of a number of EU Battlegroups into combined civil/military capability clusters.

Whether such developments would benefit from the Lisbon Treaty concept of PESCO has not yet been explored in any detail. Germany has so far contributed to sidelining PESCO as a realistic option for coordinated defence planning and capability development. Rather, the German government has come forward with the 'Framework Nations Concept' (FNC): it is designed to establish permanent, though flexible, clusters of (NATO) member states grouped around lead nations each providing the backbone of deployable force packages that would answer to the operational needs of crisis management deployments in a wide range of contingencies. The FNC appears to be an answer to the fuzzy and uncertain expectations raised in 2010 and 2011 by the Pooling and Sharing and Smart Defense initiatives, respectively. The fact that Germany introduced the FNC in NATO rather than into the EU's CSDP framework reflects the continued preference of the German Ministry of Defence for the Atlantic Alliance as the predominant context of Germany's security and defence policies.

CSDP is not, in German eyes, developing into a military alliance on a par with NATO. At best, it can be a framework for policy coordination, a platform for harmonising

capability developments and an instrument of measured independence of the EU: intergovernmental policy coordination using the CSDP institutions such as the PSC and the European Union Military Committee; capability development with the help of the European Union Military Staff and the European Defence Agency; making Europe less dependent upon US policies and capabilities through high-level involvement of Heads of States and Government in favour of a European defence agenda as practised at the December 2013 European Council on Defence, which will be repeated this coming summer.

Germany is preparing a defence and security White Paper for 2016. The document can be expected to spell out the country's orientation towards and contributions to a European security concept and capability that is reacting to global and regional challenges. It will position Germany as an integrated part of the EU's effort to act as a regional power that promotes stability internally and in its neighbourhood, and collectively contributes to the preservation of global commons – in consonance with NATO and as a trusted partner of the USA. The European dimension of German foreign and security policy remains central – Kissinger's dictum that Germany is too big for Europe, too small for the world' can only be falsified if Germany helps keep Europe together.

## FROM RELUCTANCE TO POLICY: A NEW GERMAN STANCE ON THE CSDP?

Ronja KEMPIN

Approaching the end of the year 2014, hardly anyone on the European continent would contest that Germany (once more) is the strongest force in Europe. Since the beginning of the sovereign debt crisis in the European Union (EU), Berlin has over time become more assertive in its use of economic power within Europe. In early February 2014, its political leadership assured the international community of a pro-active German security and defence policy. The Munich speeches of – respectively – the German President as well as of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Defence sent out the message that the country will live up to its responsibilities. Based on some unanticipated and perhaps even alienating German actions in the area of security and defence politics (e.g. the countries abstention in the United Nations Security Council on Resolution 1973 establishing a no-fly zone over Libya), Berlin's partners have increasingly called for a more predictable and reliable German foreign policy orientation. With regard to the country's engagement in the Common Security and Defence Policy of the EU, it seems that Berlin – after years of estrangement – has found a way to shape CSDP according to its own security and defence scheme. A way, however, that will move the country further away from its most important partner in the EU, namely France.

Germany's post-Second World War foreign, as well as its security and defence politics, have always formed a theme that is difficult to assess. However, for the last decades, two concepts seemed to be irrevocable axioms of (West-)German foreign and security policy: first and foremost, Germany has been considered a 'Civilian Power' pursuing, as Breuer states, 'a pro-Western and pro-democratic course based on striving for international cooperation, integration and the transfer of sovereignty to supranational organisations'.<sup>15</sup> At least in part derived from this, the second paradigm has been Germany's outspoken integration with the western powers, expressed in a strong commitment to European integration and cooperation within the Atlantic Alliance (*Westbindung*). These dictums help us explain that Germany, together with France and the United Kingdom (UK), was the core nation in the setting up of CSDP: it had prepared the Declaration on Strengthening the Common European Policy on Security and Defence, which was adopted by the European Council in Cologne 1999.

Indeed, the country invested itself in the creation of both military and civilian headline goals and the establishment of the Battlegroups, as well as of the crisis management

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<sup>15</sup> Breuer, F. (2006) 'Between Ambitions and Financial Constraints: The Reform of the German Armed Forces', *German Politics*, Vol. 15, no. 2: pp. 206-220.

structures. For Berlin, the primary interest has always been the promotion of member states' integration in the area of security and defence policy. Thus, contrary to France and the UK, who are interested in CSDP as a means of defence capability generation, Germany always addressed the EU's Common Security and Defence Policy from a more conceptual point of view. CSDP missions and operations were much less a German priority. Until today, not a single CSDP mission or operation has been launched by Berlin. On the other hand, Berlin has invested heavily in CSDP concepts and working methods. The most prominent recent cases in point are the November 2010 German-Swedish Food-for-thought paper on 'Intensifying Military Cooperation in Europe' (pooling and sharing), the October 2013 Non-Paper on the 'Enhance and Enable Initiative' (E2I) as well as the country's permanent quest for an action plan on the implementation of the EU's comprehensive approach to crisis management.

The reason for the (new) German conceptual approach to CSDP is not to be found in the country's historic experiences and their respective consequences. The long-standing obsession with becoming 'normal' in the sense of other medium-sized western powers has proven to be a somewhat never-ending obligation.<sup>16</sup> A huge part of Germany's 'input' into CSDP stems from the country's dependency on a well-functioning international order. With its highly globalised, export-oriented economy, German prosperity derives from a very large extent from reliable and enforceable international standards and structures. It is these standards and structures that Berlin tries to 'set' also via CSDP. Almost all of the CSDP missions and operation launched since 2012 aim at capacity building and/or the training of security forces. Compared to the period 2003-2008, Germany strongly engages itself in these missions and operations, both financially as through the deployment of civilian experts and military forces.

Indeed, Berlin considers security as the prerequisite for social and economic development. However, in order for the EU and its member states to best tackle respective country-specific and regional problems with CSDP, the instrument – at least from a German perspective – has to be improved. Cooperation, but also transparency, between member states and the Brussels organs has to be increased. Needs and risk assessments have to be refined, as an improved CSDP can also serve as a model to address international security questions and set new standards for cooperation and coordination.

However, the more Germany pushes for more 'conceptual' clarity in CSDP, the more it loses its most important ally, France. For Paris, the best way to evolve CSDP is operations, not concepts. For the sake of CSDP, both parties urgently need to find some middle ground.

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<sup>16</sup> Kornblum, J. (2013) 'Learn to Live with Germany', American Institute for Contemporary German Studies. See: <http://www.aicgs.org/2013/10/learn-to-live-with-germany/>.



# THE CSDP FROM A GERMAN VANTAGE POINT

Falk TETTWEILER

German security and defence policy have been following several main principles for many years now. Three of the most important of them are comprehensiveness in crisis management, the preference for crisis prevention and multilateralism. Obviously, the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) fits into this political mindset quite well. Firstly, the main strength of the European Union (EU) as a security provider is its ability to use and coordinate means from different policy fields like development cooperation, diplomacy, economy and civilian and military capabilities for crisis management. This ability is the prerequisite for designing comprehensive strategies and comprehensive action. Secondly, conflict prevention is an important facet in the external action of the EU. Two prominent means in this field are development cooperation and partnership programmes. Thirdly, the CSDP is multi-lateral in nature.

This shows that the CSDP meets German interests in many ways. Because of this congruency, Germany takes various efforts to strengthen the CSDP and the EU's comprehensive approach. Germany was one of the first member states that demanded Foreign Affairs Council Conclusions on the comprehensive approach to demonstrate support for the High Representative's and the European Commission's endeavour to strengthen this vital working method. Moreover, Germany, together with other member states, launched various initiatives. To name just a few of them: the E2I, an initiative to improve financing of civilian CSDP Missions, various initiatives to enhance the capabilities of the EU Battlegroups for military rapid response, and a transparency initiative in military capability development.

EU member states share a common vision of the EU as a security provider. This is the main driver behind their endeavour to enhance CSDP. The basis of this vision is the experience of several member states that they cannot meet their security interests on their own. The sustainable success of unilateral attempts is getting more and more unlikely. On the other hand, member states experience today that common efforts in the framework of CSDP missions and operations are quite successful. Nevertheless, the major obstacle in the way of a more effective CSDP remains national egoism.

One prerequisite for the success of CSDP missions and operations is the provision of the right civilian and military capabilities by member states. To make available the necessary military capabilities for crisis management for both NATO and the EU, Germany participates in several bi- and multilateral cooperation formats like the European Air Transport Command, multinational Headquarters, etc. Because

Germany, like the other member states, only has at its disposal a 'single set of forces' it avoids permanent attribution of capabilities either to NATO or the EU. However, this principle does not influence the fact that any development of national capabilities supports the effectiveness of both the EU and NATO.

Although the Treaty on European Union opens up the possibility of PESCO, Germany, as pointed out above, currently prefers multilateral or bilateral cooperation. The reason for this is practicality. An official PESCO has no practical benefit compared with a multinational cooperation framework. Quite the contrary, launching PESCO is a multilateral cooperation with much higher bureaucratic hurdles. Member states that want to constitute PESCO have to notify their intention to the Foreign Affairs Council and the High Representative. If the Council does not adopt a decision with qualified majority in favour of this intention, the member states will not be allowed to establish a Permanent Structured Cooperation. The same procedure would be applied in case of any changes of the arrangement.

As mentioned earlier, Germany does not see the EU and NATO as competing organisations. From a German vantage point both organisations have their advantages. While NATO has a very effective command structure for large-scale operations at its disposal, the EU has the capability to act as a comprehensive actor in crisis management. Therefore, for Germany there is no 'either or' but a 'both and'. This is the reason why Germany puts much effort in enhancing NATO-EU cooperation and provides both organisations with high value capabilities like the Multinational Joint Headquarters in Ulm. A strict functional division of labour between NATO and the EU is not desirable from a German point of view. Nevertheless, it is thinkable that an organisation might more likely engage in specific regions – e.g. the EU in Africa –, or take over specific tasks – e.g. NATO and the territorial defence of Europe.

*This article expresses the author's opinion and is not an official statement.*

# THE “BELIEVERS”

# BELGIUM AND THE MIRACLE OF EUROPEAN DEFENCE

Sven BISCOP

Belgium believes in European defence. This belief is shared by political, diplomatic and military decision-makers and public opinion alike. That is a strength, for in the habitual absence of elaborate strategic documents it provides its defence policy with at least some sense of purpose. For Belgium, maintaining a strong transatlantic alliance passes through the building of a strong CSDP in the EU, which de facto is the European pillar of NATO but can act autonomously as well. This strong belief is also a weakness however, for a belief is seldom questioned or justified through sound argumentation: one believes and that's that. As a result ritualistic professions of allegiance continue, but the original purpose of the doctrine tends to be forgotten. Belgium has always been a leading theologian of European defence, playing a key role in developing concepts such as 'pooling and sharing', but the discourse is becoming sterile and losing the power to convert the heretic.

Instead an unwarranted trust that miracles will happen has taken shape. Whenever budget cuts are announced, as is the case today, politicians of all colours revert to the same mantra: salvation through European defence. If only we unite our forces with those of our European brethren, we will see the miracle of the multiplication of the capabilities. Alas, this stance overlooks the fact that for them to be multiplied, there have to be some capabilities in the first place. Military marriages tend to be traditional: no dowry, no wedding. Military cooperation takes place where a win-win situation is created and all parties benefit from coordinating or even integrating their capabilities with each other. The more capabilities Belgium scraps from its arsenal, the less attractive it will be for potential partners. For lack of investment Belgium even runs the risk that existing partnerships will unravel; our partners are already eying us suspiciously. The integration of the Dutch and Belgian navies is one of the best examples of far-reaching yet maximally flexible defence cooperation in Europe – but if Belgium cannot replace its two frigates alongside the Netherlands it will be imperilled.

What are needed now are acts of devotion. Before it can expect any miracles, Belgium must be seen to be practising its belief. That cannot be done on alms alone. At the very least, Belgium should maintain its defence budget at the same level, and envisage a long-term investment plan in function of the strategic vision that the defence minister has been tasked to produce. The minimum objective ought to be obvious: to maintain at least one significant capability that can operate across the spectrum, including combat operations, in army, navy and air force. That will give any future Belgian government maximal flexibility. If Belgium abandons this range of

capabilities and opts for an entirely non-combatant air force for example, governments when requested to participate in operations may find that they are no longer able even when they are willing. Or worse, for lack of fighter aircraft they may come under pressure to deploy land forces in a risky situation in which they would rather not, if participation in the operation is imperative.

Abandoning yet more capabilities will eliminate options for defence cooperation. Vice versa, cooperation is the only way of maintaining a broader range of capabilities. Any future fighter capacity for example can be integrated with a partner or partners to the same extent as the Belgian navy is with that of the Netherlands. Then Belgium will see that miracles can be engineered – if the fee is paid. And the more we are seen to be practising, the more our sermons in favour of European defence will be heard by other, hitherto less convinced members of the congregation. To that end Belgium should also invest in some of the crucial EU-level projects (such as air-to-air refuelling and drones) of the European Defence Agency, an institution that it is keen to promote.

Capabilities must be acquired for a purpose, of course. It is not always clear how to understand the trinity of Belgium's belief in European defence, and in the Charter of the United Nations (which implies that action must be taken when it is violated), and its strategic culture that is strongly pacifist (which goes for all political parties as well as the public). Yet of late Belgium has participated prominently in the air campaigns over Libya and Iraq, in the naval campaign against piracy, and in the training mission in Mali (though it was conspicuously absent in the Central African Republic). If Belgium can maintain a consistent contribution whenever Europe decides that responsibility must be assumed (including for significant land operations) it appears therefore that even this mystery can be resolved.

# NO MORE 'BRAVE LITTLE BELGIUM' IN THE CSDP?

THE AMAZING STRATEGIC ORCHESTRA OF BELGIAN DEFENCE

Belgium is a country with limited military ambitions. Yet even if the Belgian public (including the Belgian decision makers) would embrace a more ambitious defence effort, it is clear that only European level cooperation would create sufficient leverage to turn these relatively limited military means into a genuine contribution to Belgian security, and increase Belgium's influence in international politics. The same can be said for all member states of the EU and NATO. Nevertheless, the EU's CSDP means more to the Belgian defence community than just leverage. CSDP has a special status; an ideological dimension. CSDP is seen as a means to create a more united Europe that can better guarantee security, and as such promote European values and standards. Belgium has a historical track record of taking the lead in that 'progressive framing of a common Union defence policy leading to a common defence'. Sometimes this is even a source of friction within the EU.

The best-known example of such friction is the April 2003 'Chocolate summit' in Tervuren. In the context of a divided EU following the American military intervention of Iraq, Belgium convened a conference on the future of CSDP with the other members of 'the European coalition of the unwilling', i.e. France, Germany and Luxembourg. From a diplomatic point of view the initiative could be questioned, but the ideas emanating from the summit did influence CSDP in important ways. This conference effectively planted the seeds for a variety of later projects such as the EDA, the European Security and Defence College, the EU Battlegroups, the EATC and the EU Operations Centre. Belgium again took the lead for a more united European defence effort with its 2010 Council presidency. This time Plan A was to activate the PESCO clause of the EU Treaty. Without getting into a discussion on the real meaning of the words of the clause, supporters and opponents alike agree that succeeding in this effort would have been a major step in leveraging the tools of the EU Treaty to deepen cooperation within CSDP. The fruitless result of this exercise is well known: PESCO has been honourably buried. Plan B was then presented and Pooling and Sharing became the new buzzwords for defence talk within the EU, quickly followed by smart(er) thinking about defence within NATO.

Until now, the position of Belgian Defence is that CSDP should aim for a gradual process towards military autonomy and not limit itself to being the civil-military friendly side-kick of NATO. Belgians working on and in CSDP are still supporting the projects that could revive CSDP. One of these concerns the possibility for groups of member states to form coalitions of the willing for military tasks under an EU flag with much more autonomy (TEU Article 44). Another project is the writing of a new

European Security Strategy that articulates the future security and defence priorities of the EU. Belgian officials have also invested a lot in making the EU Maritime Security Strategy truly strategic as well as comprehensive. This Maritime Security Strategy could be a helpful stepping-stone towards a similar approach for the overarching ESS. But Belgian voluntarism for CSDP is sorely tested in budgetary terms. Whilst in the early 2000s Belgium could still participate in major European armaments projects such as the A400M and the NH90, annually recurring budgetary cuts have stopped major investments since 2008 and, even more importantly, new budget cuts have led to a forecast of zero investment space until 2019. In international corridors the position of Belgium as a lead nation for more European defence cooperation is increasingly questioned. Signing declarations or letters of intent for European capability programmes without the means to assume a fair share of the cost is hurting Belgium's position in the CSDP. It also reflects negatively on the position of the CSDP in the European security realm itself. As Belgium is still seen as a core supporter of the CSDP project, both are increasingly deemed to be unserious.

Statistics on defence spending input of course need to be balanced by a measurement of operational output. Being creative with limited means is a national sport within the Belgian government and the Belgian Ministry of Defence is no exception. If one looks at the figures of the last ten years of operational engagement, the Belgian armed forces ought not be too humble with an average of having more than 900 military personnel at any time in operation. Nevertheless, it has known a steep decline from a peak of 1,269 in 2009 towards 598 in 2013. This trend is set to continue in 2014. Again we see a negative link towards the CSDP from a Belgian perspective. In February 2014, Belgium had to decline participation in an EU military operation. For the first time it was simply no longer possible to find the budgetary space to pay for a limited participation on company or even platoon level for the EUFOR mission in the Central African Republic. As neither the Foreign Affairs budget could pick up the bill, it was decided by the government not to participate. The same budgetary reality constrains the willingness of the Belgian government to contemplate an actual deployment of a Belgian-led EU Battlegroup, as was the case for the second half of 2014. This position contrasts starkly with the Belgian fervour towards other EU member states to take up their fair share in filling in the EU Battlegroup roster. Similarly, Belgium will not contribute to the EU's maritime operation EUNAVFOR in 2015 and the Chief of Defence has warned that there might not be enough in the budget to maintain the Belgian presence in the EU operation in Mali from the second half of 2015 onwards, ending the role of Belgium within the operational part of the CSDP for that year.

The structural dimension of this negative trend is underlined by the fact that even bringing the investment share of the Belgian defence budget to zero in 2015 (until 2019) is not sufficient to create the necessary budgetary space for Belgian contributions to expeditionary military operations that reflect the economic and political

position of Belgium in the world. It is a bad omen for the future health of an organisation if it is not able to invest in its future capabilities, but it is downright deadly for that organisation when it cannot fulfil its core business anymore and as such loses part of its *raison d'être*. It goes without saying that this equally hampers the international position of Belgium. And still, at a national level the declarations of European voluntarism go on with hearings and declarations in the Parliament on European defence cooperation. Furthermore, the latest government agreement claims that '[...] the actions of the Belgian government will be based on a voluntarist policy within the EU for the development of a Common Security and Defence Policy' – while the accompanying budgetary charts slash the budget. Can the EU do more to get the attention of the Belgian government for CSDP again? Well, yes. When national priorities have to be made on operational engagement, visibility is a determining (political) factor. If in a report in preparation of the European Council summit on defence in December 2013 the High Representative has to acknowledge that the visibility of CSDP could be improved it must be because there is a problem. NATO(-supported) military operations are not necessarily more needed or desirable than EU military operations but there is a difference in terms of political visibility.

Another issue with CSDP is that the EU framework for supporting the more common approach of the capability side of the national defence effort is too loose and as such cannot put sufficient pressure on the political decision process for defence. Although the EDA is an intergovernmental organisation, certainly military representatives expect more support for real common capability projects and less paper. Maybe the EDA has too many priorities and it could do better in only investing its limited means and personnel in projects that find sufficient support with the member states. Practice shows that a cluster approach with a combination of a bigger member state together with (regional) partners or just a regional cluster seems to be a format that is adapted to the current state of defence cooperation within Europe. The EDA could do more to be the linkage between this pragmatic cluster cooperation level and the necessary top-down guidance for a more European-level coordinated defence effort. Another point of the rather loose character of EU military capability coordination is that the EDA only has the 20% investment norm for national risk and burden sharing and not the combined '2 and 20% NATO norms'. Additionally, the EDA does not set specific national capability requirements as does the NATO Defence Planning Process. (The attentive reader could now reflect: 'OK, but if the Belgian government would follow these NATO criteria then there should not be an investment or an operational engagement issue for Belgian Defence for CSDP').

If the EU military operations were to have a fully common funding mechanism based on an annual percentage of the GDP, it would be impossible to be a free-rider for EU operations and this would incentivise participation of national contingents as all member states would probably want to have a return on investment. Strangely enough, the Belgian CSDP policy regarding this point follows the more general line of



the well-known 'costs lie where they fall' principle. You cannot be a voluntarist CSDP supporter for every issue... The above vision shows that the budgetary aspect of defence casts an ever-growing shadow on the purpose and the value of defence in defending national security, national wealth and national interests within the necessary European level framework. This means that humanitarian, normative or ideological considerations on the use of military means are given an increasingly limited role in the debate. Of course, this national tendency is also reflected in the Belgian position on the CSDP. So is the CSDP not important for Belgium? Well, not important enough to let it have a positive impact on the Belgian level of defence investment. Increasingly, the same can be said about the willingness for military deployments. But what the heck, we still love (to talk about) it!

*The views and ideas in this article do not necessarily reflect the official points of view of Belgian Defence.*

# ASK NOT WHAT ITALY CAN DO FOR THE CSDP...

Giovanni FALEG

... Ask what CSDP can do for Italy. With a troubled economy and growing instability on the Southern borders, Italy's traditional reliance on multilateralism as a way to achieve its strategic objectives is set to increase. Life gets tougher and tougher for a middle power like Italy, with global trade and economic interests but limited political and military assets. However, 'multilateralism' is by no means a synonym of greater engagement in EU defence. As a matter of fact, financial hardship and new threats may actually drive Italy further away from the CSDP in the future, if the latter remains incapable of agreeing and acting.

If truth be told, Italy is the second largest contributor to CSDP civilian and military missions behind France, and traditionally a proactive supporter of deeper defence integration in the EU. The 'More Europe on Defence' agenda (2013) jointly launched by the Ministry of Defence and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and input for the reform of the EEAS crisis structures for the planning and conduct of crisis management in preparation for the 2013 European Council's session on defence, are some examples of Italy's commitment to a stronger CSDP.<sup>17</sup>

A higher degree of Europeanisation in the defence sector is still seen in Rome as a priority, particularly in three dimensions: 1) capabilities (pooling and sharing); 2) structures (command and control); and 3) interoperability (at the operational level). Italy's interest in CSDP stems from an apparently firm mixture of factors: the EU's operational outreach in areas of vital interest (the Western Balkans, Mediterranean, Africa); the propensity to engage in low-spectrum, low-risk and small humanitarian interventions, matching up the soft-security type of CSDP missions to date; the advancement of the EU integration process; and, last but not least, the interest of key governmental and private stakeholders in defence market integration.

That said, like other EU countries, Italy is growing increasingly disappointed by the pipe dream of the CSDP as an effective military policy. When confronted with scarce resources, states become more cooperative, but also more pragmatic and risk-adverse. Substantial investments (financial and political) in an over-bureaucratic CSDP lacking strategic vision and military capabilities may not guarantee a return for Italy's defence and security needs. Other fora for multilateral security cooperation, such as NATO (which remains the cornerstone of Italian defence) or ad hoc bilateral arrangements, could therefore be more viable options. In fact, this is already

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<sup>17</sup> 'More Europe: More From Europe, More to Europe'. See: [http://www.difesa.it/Primo\\_Piano/Documents/2013/More%20Europe%20final.pdf](http://www.difesa.it/Primo_Piano/Documents/2013/More%20Europe%20final.pdf).

happening. Despite the pro-EU rhetoric, Italy's engagement with the CSDP has fallen short of convincing EU partners to place a greater emphasis on the Mediterranean basin, or to tackle issues like migration from a strategic perspective. In this regard, the impact of Federica Mogherini's appointment as the new High Representative/Vice-President may be limited and should not be overemphasised, particularly since Italy's willingness to support her is undetermined (Italian Governments are congenitally unstable).

As a result, it seems that CSDP is giving Italy little help in meeting its national interests. Furthermore, as CSDP is giving up complex and hard security tasks to coalitions of the willing and able, and the appetite for low-scale intervention is decreasing due to rising costs of deployments, the question arises as to what can possibly push Italy to keep on sustaining an ineffective EU defence policy.

The answer, not surprisingly, lies in the transatlantic relationship. Italy's vision of European security has always sought a balanced division of labour between NATO and the inclusion in the 'leading pack' of European integration, including its defence volet. Both are considered as vital national interests and explain Italy's behaviour as a 'moderator', seeking a third way between Atlanticists and Europeanists. Should Europeans realise that a braver, more capable and more strategic EU is a key strategic enabler for NATO, the need for brokerage could bring the Italian national interest closer to the *finalité* of CSDP.

# ITALY AND THE CSDP

Alessandro MARRONE

The CSDP is important for Italy because of at least three main reasons. First, Rome continues to see the EU as a framework for collective action in the Union's neighbourhood and as being more effective than a purely unilateral action in many cases. Second, multilateralism, international law and civil-military cooperation are deeply entrenched in Italy's strategic culture, and the CSDP fits perfectly with these elements. Third, the fact that the current High Representative/Vice President (HR/VP) Federica Mogherini is the former Italian foreign minister creates an additional and strong link between Italy and the CSDP.

Italy has substantial expertise and interest in further strengthening civil-military capability development within the CSDP. Already in 2013 Italy proposed the document 'More Europe on Defence' – jointly elaborated by the Ministry of Defence and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs<sup>18</sup> –, which included important proposals in this regard. Italy is also willing to invest in pooling and sharing initiatives, through flexible formats but within an EU institutional context.

Permanent Structured Cooperation is considered by Italy to be a workable mechanism for cooperation under the CSDP. It may be not that attractive for Italian governments, but generally speaking there is no opposition to this mechanism. PESCO is considered by policy-makers a viable option, but as for other options it cannot be decoupled from a truly common security and defence policy, which has to be based on a newly agreed EU strategy for its external projection.

Italy has traditionally seen the EU-CSDP and NATO as complementary and not in opposition. Plus, a formal and abstract division of labour between NATO and EU-CSDP is not considered a useful way to think strategically. Twenty-two member states of both the EU and NATO have only one set of military forces to put at the disposal of both organisations, thus Italy considers NATO-EU cooperation preferable to any unnecessary duplications. At the same time, in Italy's view the CSDP should be able to autonomously deploy both robust civilian and military missions when and wherever needed.

Some of the main drivers of CSDP developments are considered to be the crises in the Union's neighbourhood, and the political willingness of member states, as well as of EU institutions, to cooperate on the CSDP. Among the main obstacles to a more effective CSDP is the divergence of political views among EU member states on the priorities and what Europeans have to do in order to address them (e.g. Libya).

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<sup>18</sup> 'More Europe: More From Europe, More to Europe'. See: [http://www.difesa.it/Primo\\_Piano/Documents/2013/More%20Europe%20final.pdf](http://www.difesa.it/Primo_Piano/Documents/2013/More%20Europe%20final.pdf).

# SPAIN AND THE CSDP

Enrique FOJÓN

Europe is currently facing a real strategic problem as a result of new global challenges and shifting power dynamics. Instability in different parts of the European neighbourhood constitutes a source of different risks that can put in danger the stability of the entire continent. Furthermore, the so-called US strategic re-balancing to the Asia-Pacific means Europe will increasingly have to take care of its own security and defence.

Does the concept of CSDP fit the current strategic picture? CSDP looks like an instrument conceived in and for a benign milieu, to deal with the kind of liberal interventions undertaken throughout the last decade of the 20th century. As Article 42.1 of the Treaty of the EU indicates, it was conceived for tasks such as peacekeeping, conflict prevention, peacebuilding, etc. However, the evolving strategic context and the perspective of a chronic conflict situation suggests a new paradigm for defence is needed.

The current set of circumstances spells out the necessity for a solution to the anomaly posed by the overlap of NATO and the CSDP. Such a solution could take the form of a different and complementary set of purposes and tasks – and should in any case aim towards greater complementarity. After all, both organisations draw on the same set of (national) military capabilities.

As a member of the EU, Spain has a special interest in the solution of this problem. Not least, its status of a frontier country leaves Spain at risk of being affected by the spillover effects that can result from the many challenges present in its immediate neighbourhood. In fact, the harmful effects associated with immigration, illicit trafficking and a hypothetical lack of energy supply are examples of the type of situations that CSDP is fit to deal with.

Defence is another matter. The content of Article 42.2 of the EU Treaty can only be understood as a version of collective defence on a case-by-case basis, and that is what NATO is for. For its part, PESCO is conceived only for selected groups of member states: it is a sort of ‘cooperation of opportunity’ instrument. In this regard, the CSDP can be considered as a recipe for ‘coalitions of the willing’, out of a common, EU-wide strategic and political purpose.

From this perspective it is important to bear in mind that military capabilities are always linked to operational concepts, themselves linked to strategic visions – an essential requirement for international ‘actorness’. But who is the strategic actor in charge of formulating strategy – the EU or ‘those Member States whose military

capabilities fulfil higher criteria and which have made more binding commitments to one another in (this) area with a view to the most demanding missions'? That is indeed the key question.

Without a sound and shared strategy, military capabilities have no sense and planning a defence budget becomes a useless endeavour. The intervention in Libya is a good example in this regard. PESCO should undergo deep transformation and become part of a comprehensive joint planning process involving both NATO and the EU's CSDP. Ukraine and ongoing instability in the Middle East and North Africa region are warnings of CDSP's obsolescence.



Enrique MORA

The Spanish perception of the CSDP is as simple and as straightforward as its perception of the European project, i.e., something valuable and worth supporting. I am fully aware that 'the European project' has different meanings in different corners of geographical and political Europe. But in Spain, it mostly keeps the original meaning of an ever-closer union.

The economic crisis has deeply, negatively affected the EU's popularity. Certainly, and to some extent it has been a salutary consequence – there were somehow too naive expectations on Europe before. But the new pessimism is mostly restricted to economic policy and to the nasty consequences of some huge mistakes made in managing the first stages of the euro crisis. The political project is still there, even with some tweaking, and it retains its allure for most of Spanish citizens.

It is that European 'magic' that makes CSDP more palatable to Spanish public opinion. For historical reasons, still flamed by a number of opinion leaders, Spaniards have a convoluted, to say the least, relationship with military affairs. Simply put, values widely associated to security and defence in the Western World are not recognised as such by wide sectors of the civil society. I can hardly imagine any country, at least with the size and security concerns of Spain, where the leader of the main opposition party can state that he would suppress the Ministry of Defence, as a measure to address the budgetary problem, and his words are met by rather tepid reactions. In such a social ecosystem, CSDP is the exception because it comes with a European flavour. That gives the Government – any Government to date – room for manoeuvre that hardly exists in any other defence framework. As a consequence, Spain's level of ambition in CSDP is high and – a nice contradiction – clearly higher than society's political will to underpin its military. Only three EU countries contribute to every single one of the five running military operations. Not only is Spain among them, it is the biggest contributor. After four years of agonising

budgetary constraints that can only be read as the strongest conceivable political statement to support EU defence.

That level of commitment reflects an ambitious agenda for CSDP's future. Spain supports a badly needed permanent planning and conduct capability for both civilian and military missions. On the key issue of military capabilities, the CSDP can be instrumental in bringing about a more efficient European defence industry. CSDP's development will pave the way for more cooperative capabilities that will require a more efficient industrial base. Pooling and sharing is a useful concept, but it will not produce the breakthrough needed, and it will not do it exactly for the same political, industrial and even philosophical reasons that the 'free trade area' did not do it but the 'common market' did.

CSDP is not about European crisis. It is about someone else's crisis. European conflicts are either NATO's business or individual country's business for those who introduce themselves as neutrals, – whatever neutrality means in a world where the internet of things brings interdependence to a new level. If Europe is a political project, and I think it is, that state of affairs is unsustainable in the long run. For that reason, CSDP has to, slowly, step-by-step evolve into a real common European defence. That is – still – a Spanish project.



Felix ARTEAGA

On the one hand, the CSDP is important because Spain and Spanish society have been very pro-European so far and all EU common policies enjoy high social and political support. Accordingly, Spain has participated in CSDP structures, civilian and military CSDP missions and the Battlegroup rotations. It also participates in major weapons programmes within the consortium Airbus Group (Eurofighter or A400M), the Organisation for Joint Armament Cooperation, the Letter of Intent and it has begun to participate in 'Pooling and Sharing' programmes such as the EATC or the European Security and Defence College. Spain is an active member of the European Defence Agency and it hosts the EU Satellite Centre. Spain also promoted the development of PESCO during its presidency of the EU Council in 2010.

Spain has no vocation to become a global actor and it leaves this role to the EU, especially – in accordance with the 2003 European Security Strategy – in the field of crisis management. Besides this, the CSDP helps legitimise Spanish defence policy; a policy that receives a lower level of domestic support. According to the 2013 National Security Strategy, a robust CSDP reinforces the foreign, security and defense of Spain and complements its national capabilities. Spain could increase its contribution to European cooperative projects regarding ISTAR projects. But, in the

short term, it seems unlikely that Spain will share essential assets that are at the core of its national sovereignty.

So far, Spanish governments have shown a bipartisan consensus in strengthening the role and capabilities of the CSDP and, also, in making it compatible with transatlantic cooperation under NATO. Socialist and Conservative governments differ in their preferred mix of both components, but none has proposed the EU as an alternative to the traditional mix. On the one hand, the EU is not considered to be on a par with NATO nor is the EU expected to become a military organisation in the future. Thus, the EU is expected to focus on the lower part of the military spectrum, while retaining its comparative advantage in the civilian spectrum (the so-called civil-military field). This seems especially so given the bilateral Defence Agreement between the United Kingdom and France, the proliferation of divergences among Member States with regard to the employment of military power (Libya, Syria and Ukraine) and, of course, the impact of the economic crisis on defence and security budgets.

Spain therefore supports a progressive and balanced development among the political, military and industrial components of the CSDP. It prefers the EU multilateral framework due to its higher level of legitimation for international commitments but Spain is also taking part in ad hoc coalitions (Iraq). Among other drivers the CSDP may add value to national contributions, economies of scale and EU non-military assets. With regard to obstacles, divergences among national strategic cultures, the unilateral behavior and attitudes of the European great powers, the unfair contribution of States members and last, but not least, the lack of common funding for CSDP missions.



Manuel Muñiz

Spain has over the years been a committed supporter of the CFSP and CSDP. This support has been a constant since the early days of the Treaty of Maastricht when CFSP was first designed, and has run through different governments of different ideologies. Support for CSDP is regularly manifested by Spanish policy-making elites, in the strategic documents they produce, and in the country's deeds. Spain has indeed been one of the few EU member states to have participated in each and every CSDP military operation to date. It usually assumes around a tenth of the burden of these missions, be it financial or operational, but in some cases like Atalanta or Althea it has actually been at certain points close to or even the largest contributor in terms of troops and personnel.



Support for CSDP comes from the overarching belief that what is good for Europe – meaning here ‘what strengthens the EU’ – is in the long term good for Spain. The country is, therefore, very clearly guided by milieu goals in its support for European defence. In some instances, however, Spain has found CSDP, and other capabilities of the EU with a security dimension, such as Frontex, of great use and an effective means of protecting specific national strategic interests. Be it through having an EU-wide counter-terrorism policy, or a common maritime border control mission in waters around the Canary Islands like Hera, Spain benefits greatly from being able to ‘Europeanise’ certain security issues. The potential of elevating national concerns to a supranational level is far greater in the EU than in NATO, in part because European partners tend to find themselves sharing key interests more often than not. It is perhaps for this reason that overall Spain has always been a keen supporter of CSDP as a capability to develop, at the very least, in parallel to NATO.

*Each expert writes here in a personal capacity and the views they express do not necessarily reflect the views of the respective organisations they work for.*

# THE END OF CSDP THEOLOGY?

## SPAIN'S SHIFTING SECURITY POLICY AND THE CSDP

Francisco de Borja Lasheras

### Multiple crises, shifting collective perceptions

In many ways, Spain epitomises the average European society nowadays. Given demographic and economic patterns, it faces fundamental challenges to its welfare system (a core foundation of political and social peace), and is struggling in the global race of competition. Although some macro indicators confirm that the country has improved its economic performance and is even experiencing a certain growth, six years through the economic crisis Spain finds itself in the midst of another crisis, of a political and even constitutional nature. Surging anti-establishment parties, such as 'Podemos' (currently polling second only to the ruling conservative Popular Party), deftly swim in the waves of popular discontent with austerity policies and with Spain's tarnished elites mired in serious corruption scandals. Still an outlier in a worrying European discourse tinged by too many phobias, this 'anti-system' mood in Spain has so far not yet translated into anti-immigration or anti-European platforms, although a new euro-realism is part of the collective discourse.

When it comes to security perceptions, Spaniards do see a volatile international scene and their neighbourhood crumbling around them, from the masses of illegal migrants trying to enter Spanish territory – often dying in the seas – to the unspeakably gruesome images of ISIS beheading Westerners and their allies, to the escalating conflict in Ukraine and beyond. Generally, as much as is the case with big segments of the European population, such growing instability does not easily trump more immediate concerns of economic insecurity when it comes to policy priorities and resource allocation (e.g. defence budgets). But, as with everything else nowadays in Spain, there might be a shift in collective perceptions regarding insecurity and perhaps the role of security and defence instruments. Tellingly, in the wake of the Charlie Hebdo attacks a relevant poll recently showed that a majority of Spaniards put jihadism as a top security concern; firmly support a military response to this threat in places such as Syria, Iraq and Sahel, and favour Spain's participation in UN or NATO military missions overseas 'in defence of liberties and against radical or terrorist movements', beyond classic territorial defence tasks.<sup>19</sup> How this would translate into actual decision-making, also with a new leadership, is still unclear though.

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<sup>19</sup> Carbajosa, A. (2015) 'Un antes y un después de París', *El País*, (5 Feb). See: [http://internacional.elpais.com/internacional/2015/02/02/actualidad/1422894874\\_331587.html](http://internacional.elpais.com/internacional/2015/02/02/actualidad/1422894874_331587.html).

## Broader Spanish neighbourhood priorities

These domestic patterns are relevant to understanding Spain's shifting foreign and security policies and its current approach to the development of the Common Security and Defence Policy, NATO and overall multinational security cooperation. They are also relevant in terms of political back-and-forth and possible policy shifts.

Spain's security policy over the recent years of crisis has been generally marked by competing lines of continuity (e.g. protection of vital interests in the North of Africa), strategic retrenchment (e.g. a certain reluctance to engage in massive, open-ended, faraway, Afghan-style scenarios) and re-positioning (e.g. the focus on the Sahel and Gulf of Guinea). Moreover, there are also attempts at policy innovation beyond established lines, for instance, through the hammering out of new agreements and potential security alliances, with defence components, anchoring far away partners from Latin America and Asia.

The foreign and security policy establishment is called on to attend to competing demands (domestic, financial and international), in a context of rising instability, East and South of Spain's borders, and of upcoming changes with Spain's political system, affecting stability too. There is therefore a widespread and heightened sense of existential insecurity among decision-makers and policy pundits, with a primary focus on the rise of jihadism in Spain's immediate borders and ISIS-like scenarios, from Algeria, Libya, to the neighbouring Sahel. Immediately following in terms of security concerns, and often intertwined, come the overwhelming border pressures flowing from migration.

So, not that unlike other European countries, and after big interventions such as Afghanistan, Spain's present security doctrine blends in a revived territorial component, border security and even home affairs, with a targeted interventionist approach overseas in those grey spaces in the broader Spanish neighbourhood, given the security risks they raise (e.g. the collapse of Libya as a fertile ground for ISIS-like jihadist movements). This approach to priority threats relies heavily on military deployments (e.g. through training missions and selective engagements) – it seems, now with popular support- and intelligence sharing.

So this neighbourhood emphasis that permeates other European countries also drives Spain's main security policy efforts, with an overriding focus on the South. This partly explains Madrid's sometimes lukewarm reaction to the EU's or NATO's perceived pivot to the East after Ukraine; its sustained caucusing with like-minded NATO members to develop a credible Southern Flank, as well as a noteworthy revamping of its traditional diplomacy of facilitation and mediation with the Arab world (e.g. through initiatives on Libya and its new non-permanent seat at the UN Security Council). Nonetheless, the neighbourhood priority does not per se rule out engagement in other far away scenarios, out of alliance considerations (e.g. Spain's contribution of on-the-ground trainers in Iraq) or power projection purposes.

## The clash of Spanish security instincts

Importantly, current Spanish security policy, in a context that sees the tearing down of established strategic assumptions and the erosion of multilateral frameworks, is shaped by clashing patterns and tendencies. There is arguably a clash of security instincts underway. The pro-European and overall pro-multilateral instinct remains strong, even if tempered by the new euro-realism resulting from the EU crisis. Spain has always been a strong pro-EU and pro-CSDP supporter, endorsing political initiatives to strengthen CSDP's relevance. But, as in other countries, self-interests bear strongly in the calculations and there is a determined pan-Europeanisation of national security interests at work. Uploading security threats and challenges to the European level makes ever more political and pragmatic sense, especially in a context of stretched resources and spiraling challenges. This is coupled with a certain free-riding or benign neglect with respect to contributions to other scenarios not seen as vital (e.g. Eastern Europe).

From this prism must be seen Madrid's sustained strategy for the EU and NATO to shift resources to the 'Deep South' (including the Sahel and Gulf of Guinea). Spain is pro-active in CSDP missions in that region, being a significant and sometimes leading contributor to, for instance, EUTM Mali or operation ATALANTA, although priority and niche criteria logically determine the level of commitment.

Yet as much as Spain pushes for Europe to assume core elements of its security agenda, and for regional actors to strengthen their own capabilities, another crucial instinct which the crisis has strengthened is that of self-reliance and individualism. Similarly to other key EU chancelleries such as Paris, London or Eastern capitals, there is a deep-seated scepticism in some Madrilian quarters towards the usefulness of common fora, whether the EU or NATO, in terms of delivering solidarity – something the Spaniards share with their Baltic or Polish partners (although the source of the vital threat is naturally different in Riga and Madrid). Hence, instead of betting on a single institution, alliance or rigid framework, a trendy strong Realpolitik thinking has it that Spain should re-create its own web of cooperative relations, both for better safeguarding security interests and for classic power projection reasons. This is not too dissimilar to the picture Olivier de France painted in his analysis of Paris' pragmatism towards CSDP. Such individualist approach to security is embodied in a newfound fancy for striking pragmatic bilateral deals (e.g. Madrid's willing acceptance of US-led components of the planned missile shield and of jihadist-focused combat forces in its territory), or in the overtures for new forms of security and military cooperation with other mid-sized powers.

Lastly, many in Madrid approach power politics and the nowadays unappealing democratic agenda from a squarely security perspective which prioritises keeping relations with great powers and mid-sized regional actors, but somewhat overlooking components of human rights and democracy. Hence the reluctance to

take on strong men, from Egypt and the broader Middle East, which purportedly protect a common security agenda.

### **Spanish caucuses on CSDP: theologians, doomsayers, isolationists and pragmatists**

In these complex circumstances, within the establishment there are arguably four different visions on CSDP. They are not always neatly defined and stakeholders may emphasise one over the other, depending on the demands at stake (e.g. mission contribution, political coalitions, etc.). But these visions do underpin and shape decision-making, and are also relevant to understanding Spanish stances on NATO's future and operations. We can break them down into four main families:

*The Theologians.* They adhere to the traditional view of CSDP and European Defence as an intrinsic part of the old vision of 'Political Europe', and thus support initiatives to revamp CSDP, enhance its political prominence and foster its autonomous development from NATO (e.g. the EU OHQ project independent of NATO), also so as to decrease US dependency. Strongly pro-European, they adhere to a quasi-theological belief that the incremental Monnet approach for European integration is just as valid for the area of security and defence as is for trade, and hence that, in spite of setbacks, gradual steps will eventually materialise in a common defence.

*The Doomsayers.* This caucus sees CSDP as clinically dead as either a power project, a relevant framework for common action or a repository for serious capability development. This sentiment has increased parallel to the uncertainty looming on the future of the EU itself and given CSDP's underperformance in recent years. Without necessarily advocating for a Spanish pull-out of CSDP development, the Doomsayers, also sceptical of NATO, see more sense in investing in bilateral and mini-lateral initiatives, and in an overall buttressing of Spain's defence capacities.

*The Isolationists (Hobbesians).* The isolationists, many of whom are doomsayers too, disavow 'big' European security cooperation altogether, whether in EU and NATO, perceived as dysfunctional and, what is more important, neglectful of rising Spanish security concerns. Deeply imbued by Realpolitik views, they perceive the current regional disorder in Hobbesian terms and advocate for a strategic shift firmly back towards national interests and prerogatives. They fear NATO's pivot to the East, which, for them, risks neglecting the Southern Flank (and thus Spain's vital security interests), and are suspicious of pooling and sharing initiatives in the area of defence industry and capabilities.

*The Pragmatists.* For this group, CSDP and NATO are simply two sides of a similar project and strategic challenge – reviving European security and power in a non-European world. They favour investing equally in both, as circumstances require, fostering Spain's active participation in smart defence or pooling and sharing initia-

tives. These internationalists are open to compromises regarding the East-South security cleavage, and are willing to promote more CSDP, NATO or bilateral synergies with other European allies, not limited to Southern partners – hence the strategic dialogue with Poland.<sup>20</sup>

## Outlook for Spanish role(s) on CSDP

In the near future, on CSDP proper, Spain will continue to support practical capability-focused initiatives. As regards the politics of CSDP, it has usually co-sponsored initiatives within Weimar Plus and in other mini-lateral frameworks. It will probably continue to do so. It will also test the waters for new minilateral synergies, including closer involvement as CSDP partners of non-EU countries (i.e. Latin American countries), where Madrid sees security and European power projection benefits. Moreover, Spain will endorse an eventual moving forward on Permanent Structured Cooperation, which it has been pushing since its inception, although it will probably micro-manage the definition of the entry criteria. Though supportive of pooling and sharing, beyond official pro-CSDP rhetoric, it is unclear whether Madrid will be as determined when it comes to crucial decisions on its defence industry and procurement programmes.

As is the case with the rest of Europe, predictability is bad business in Spain nowadays. As things stand, Spain will probably drift between outbursts of internationalism and initiative-promotion and a domestic focus on its political and economic challenges. The country will probably remain in a second tier of CSDP supporters, co-sponsoring and shaping initiatives, occasionally tabling proposals on its own, pushing for a greater role for the European Defence Agency (now with a Spanish diplomat at its helm), etc. The fact that presently no 'Big Three' member is willing to fundamentally re-launch CSDP as a power projection tool, with France steering away from old ideas on *l'Europe de la défense*, should leave more space for second tier countries. Spain and Poland could therefore become leaders or first tier by default.

But, again, some caution is needed here too. Spain has always had a traditionally cautious approach to big, spotlight foreign policy initiatives. Moreover, any CSDP tier, first or second, still fundamentally lacks a shared strategic outlook on what should be CSDP's top priorities, so the comprehensive approach and training emphasis in Brussels has become a substitute for more ambitious strategic goals, shared by core EU countries. Much will of course depend on political developments in the core countries and maybe on the EU's new leadership. Still, so far chances are that 'CSDP Theologians', in Madrid and those few scattered in other capitals, push for visions long out of sync with Europe's real geopolitical and strategic developments.

<sup>20</sup> de Borjas Lasheras, F. (2014) 'East-South Security Trade-offs: Towards a European Security Compromise', *European Geostrategy*, (23 Apr). See: <http://www.europeangeostrategy.org/2014/04/east-south-security-trade-offs-towards-european-security-compromise/>.

Overall, the future shape of Spanish security policy, and which of the above instincts and clashing visions carry the day, requires an impossible juggling of too many uncertainties and factors. The outcome of Spain's political crisis and what the preferences of new political forces are will be crucial. Several of the rising forces, such as 'Podemos', are officially averse to military interventions, NATO or balancing Russia. Yet, on the other hand, a likely scenario as of 2016 is that of coalition governments, with subsequent compromises. Other tipping factors will be the changing security perceptions of the public, currently favouring intervention overseas, and the overall directions of European security cooperation, torn by competing tensions East and South.

What seems abundantly clear is that European defence, CSDP and NATO nowadays desperately need less theology. In turn, the *à la carte*, nation-driven approach is hardly a recipe either for any sustainable common purpose and can actually become a slippery slope for European security fragmentation, on top of political fragmentation. In the present times of change, more purposeful pragmatism is needed for a reset of European defence.

## **THE VIEW FROM EUROPE'S BORDERS: GREECE AND THE CSDP AS A SECURITY PROVIDER**

Antonios NESTORAS

Historically, Greece's main security concern has been the increasing power and aggressiveness of neighbouring Turkey. Greece's close proximity to Turkey and the fact that it has less military capabilities and a smaller population add up to Greek insecurity. For that reason, apart from investing in strong armed forces, Greece has consistently relied on participation in Western European integration – namely NATO, the WEU and the EU – in order to balance Turkey.

Expectations from NATO quickly faded after the Turkish invasion of Cyprus in 1974, which Greece acknowledged as evidence that the alliance was unable or unwilling to guarantee Greek territorial integrity when it came to Turkish aggression. Similarly, the Imia crisis in 1996, which brought Turkey and Greece on the verge of war, demonstrated that the EU was unsuitable to guarantee Greece's borders. Soon after, the St. Malo summit in 1998 would revive the Greek hopes for the emergence of a European defence that could provide security against Turkey.

Following on from St. Malo, the Helsinki European Council in 1999 would assert the EU's 'determination to develop an autonomous capacity to take decisions where NATO as a whole is not engaged'. By this time, however, Greek strategy had changed. In the Helsinki summit, Greece had tried to downplay the security dimension with Turkey by lifting its veto over Ankara's perspective for EU membership. This move was supposed to progressively eliminate Turkish aggression by allowing the country to participate in European integration and socialise itself with EU values and methods. Ideally, opening the door to Turkey's EU integration would be an alternative to the ineffective strategy of searching for security providers.

However, as recent developments in Turkey have proved, this great expectation did not square with reality. Today, Ankara seems almost indifferent to European membership and Turkish elites seem more concerned with asserting Turkey's role as an autonomous player in the region that was once dominated by the Ottoman Empire. While Prime Minister Erdogan used the prospect of EU accession in order to consolidate his power, in the background of the accession negotiations he implemented a radical transformation of the secular Turkish politics and established a new regime along the lines of political Islam.

During the latest Cyprus crisis in 2014, after Turkey's violation of an EU Member State's exclusive economic zone, Greece, as well as Europe, realised beyond any reasonable doubt the limits of Turkey's potential for integration with the EU. The



discussion in Brussels and other European capitals seems to be already heading towards some special status of Turkey, but not a full membership.

What is left from this sorry state of affairs is the need for Greece to secure guarantees for its territorial integrity. At the end of the day, as far as Greece is concerned, the Turkish threat remains and continues to be constituted in increasing violations of Greek airspace or the Athens Flight Information Region (FIR), refusal to submit the Aegean continental shelf dispute to the International Court of Justice and a *casus belli* – endorsed by the Turkish Grand Assembly – should Greece extend the territorial waters limit from six to twelve miles (typically allowed under the 1982 Law of the Sea Convention). Among other provocations in 2015, Turkey's decision to unilaterally issue a Notice to Airmen to reserve an extensive airspace over the Aegean Sea from 2 March – 31 December 2014 for military purposes, even though it was eventually withdrawn, is symptomatic of the situation.<sup>21</sup>

To make matters worse, the prolonged economic crisis in Greece is dramatically tipping the balance of military power in favour of Turkey. In this context, perhaps the CSDP and the vision for a common European defence could materialise eventually as a convenient bulwark against Turkish belligerence. In fact, given the dire situation of Greece's finances this seems as the only viable alternative. Finances are key to Greece's future role in the CSDP. An improvement in the ATHENA mechanism could, for example, lead to further commitments of Greek military personnel and equipment.

Greece has already proved an active supporter of CSDP. Not only did Greece play a role in the EU police mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina and CONCORDIA (in FYROM), but the country is currently participating in five military operations (even if mostly by contributing to military and police training) and seven civilian missions. Greece is also leading, as the Framework Nation, a ready to deploy EU Battlegroup (HELBROC) along with Cyprus, Bulgaria, Romania and Ukraine. In the first half of 2014 HELBROC was put at readiness for a fourth time, and it will likely do so in 2016, 2018 and 2020 too. Greece also participates in the Spanish-Italian Amphibious Force (SIAF) EU Battlegroup.

Unfortunately for Greece, the problem with the CSDP is that it is a big idea without form, an ambitious concept without any established content. Apparently, every other EU Member State is interested in shaping the CSDP according to its own strategic planning and nobody can foresee how the deliberations may conclude. Should Greece be interested in the CSDP, it is not because it is a prerequisite to assert the EU's global role, but for the reason that it has the potential to transform the EU into a security provider for the smaller Member States. The odds are not favourable,

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<sup>21</sup> See: <http://www.tovima.gr/en/article/?aid=681592>.

but, considering the ongoing confrontation of Europe with Russia, Greece may find unexpected allies in other small states in Europe's borders.

So far, it is still unclear whether the newly elected Greek government that everyone is talking about will shake strategic thinking in Athens. Naturally, SYRIZA seems to be preoccupied with straightening out the state's finances. There are, however, suggestions as to a likely new approach in national security: a few days after the elections, while Finance Minister Yanis Varoufakis was touring some of the main European capitals to marshal political support for a renegotiation of Greece's debt, Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras was hardening his stance toward Ankara in an interview to *Sabah*, a daily Turkish newspaper. Around the same time, Foreign Minister Nikos Kotzias was announcing his intention to block further EU measures against Russia over Ukraine.

SYRIZA's blend of open confrontation with the EU and pro-Russian mannerism could be a negotiating tactic over EU economic policy; the outspoken condemnation of Turkey's latest provocations just a cheap trick to consolidate domestic support. If that is not the case, then the Greeks may already be tinkering with the idea of security beyond the CSDP.

# LATVIA AND THE CSDP

Edgars KIUKUCANS

The Latvian Presidency of the Council of the European Union (EU) takes place against the backdrop of Russia's aggression in Ukraine, the spread of 'Islamic State' in Iraq and Syria, as well as terrorist attacks in Paris and Copenhagen. This security environment has created concerns about European security in the near future. These events have an impact on the foreign policy of the EU, including the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP), and therefore on Latvia as a Presidency state of the Council of the European Union.

Latvia is located in the North-Eastern part of the EU, which means that its security and defence policy is strongly affected by Russia's aggression in Ukraine. Not only Russia's disrespect for international law, but also a steady increase of military force demonstration in the Baltic Sea region has raised particular concerns in Latvia in 2014 and also in 2015. Nevertheless, what needs to be understood and clarified is that Latvia has not perceived the security threats in South-Eastern Europe as less important or less dangerous. This is the reason why Latvian defence priorities have underlined that such issues as EU-NATO and EU-US cooperation, enhancing the EU's response to hybrid threats, increasing the Union's maritime and cyber security are important to all EU member states be it Latvia, the United Kingdom, Italy or Greece.

So how does Latvia see the CSDP in 2015? The longer answer will have two main elements – first, it is a very good complementary tool to NATO in several areas like defence capability development or crisis management outside the EU. Second, it is clear that the realities of today's security environment do not allow us to easily draw borders between different EU policy areas and CSDP is no longer the only answer to the Union's security concerns.

The keyword in the first element is 'complementarity' – the idea is fundamentally simple – EU should do things what NATO is not doing and the other way around. We have 22 countries that are member states of both organisations, which means that they need to plan very carefully to what projects their resources should be allocated. The fact that most European countries lately would not win the prize of 'biggest defence spender', and actually they would also be far from nomination in this category, just underlines the importance of coordinating efforts of the EU and NATO in defence. Crisis management in some situations is one of those areas where the EU can use its instruments and achieve better results than NATO. The EU has good civilian and military tools for comprehensive approach to crisis management and conflict prevention by providing advice on security sector reform, military training and also acting during and after crisis. This means that the EU can act in its neigh-

bourhood in all phases of the crisis cycle and it just needs to be carefully evaluated where to get involved. Furthermore, appropriate attention should be drawn to the comprehensive approach so that the EU's involvement in its neighbourhood would not be firefighting, but a coordinated chain of actions.

The second element is closely connected with the recent changes in the security environment. Such threats as terrorism, cyber, an hostile influence on the audio-visual media space, illegal migration and not to forget a conventional military threat is what describes the realities of today's warfare. For the combination of these the word 'hybrid' has been given. Though we have to understand that hybrid warfare is not anything new – it is the security situation in the East and South that has raised this issue again.

It is also clear that CSDP does not cover most of the above mentioned security challenges. Most of these issues are beyond CSDP and also the Council. We have to remember that there is the Commission and the Parliament that do have important roles in non-CFSP/CSDP policies. The EU should start with raising its internal awareness that the Council is not a lonely island, but neither is the Commission nor the Parliament. The decisions on internal security, energy security, media regulations, defence, and foreign policy are interrelated and that needs to be understood in all of the EU institutions and member states. The upcoming European Council discussion on defence in June 2015 is an opportunity to give the needed push forward for the institutions to work closer and establish closer contacts when it concerns issues that are related to the Union's security.

Among the mentioned areas, special attention should be drawn to the EU's strategic communication capabilities. As we have seen lately, to have an advantage in the information space is crucially important and therefore the EU needs to do a lot more to successfully spread its messages to the general public. There is a NATO accredited Centre of Excellence in Riga which is also another instrument for the support of both organisations in the area of hybrid warfare. This is the right time to cooperate and this could also be the right instrument for cooperation. However, it needs to be stressed that the EU should not develop propaganda as is done by Russia – the EU needs to be able to deliver its message to the broader public and most importantly in a way that is appealing to a general resident of the Union.

There are always everlasting 'to do' lists in the EU where many good initiatives lie until they are buried without any notice. This time the European Council's discussion in June could push forward these initiatives. There are several reasons for stating this: first, the European Council is the meeting of the heads of state and government and if the European Council gives task then institutions might be more stressed into fulfilling those tasks; second, the security environment in the Eastern and Southern neighbourhoods will most probably push the EU to do more; finally, the new EU leadership is very keen to work on security matters.

As regards the upcoming discussion on defence, it is clear that the heads of state and government will have a serious conversation on the EU's strategic security challenges which are present in the Southern and Eastern neighbourhoods. These challenges are both conventional, and hybrid threats. Therefore, agreement on further action is more than necessary not only for Europe itself, but also for international actors which are not friendly towards the EU. Moreover, there needs to be a clear message that NATO and the United States have a special importance for European security and cooperation with these actors is crucial for the future of the CSDP. Indeed the list is long, but when, if not now, is the right time to do it.

So to sum up – the first half of 2015 is an interesting time to be the Presidency of the Council of the EU. There are many challenges and many problems and if we might solve at least half of them then in some time we might again say that 'Europe has never been so prosperous, so secure nor so free', as was written in the 2003 European Security Strategy.

*The views expressed in this article do not represent the official position of the Latvian Ministry of Defence.*

# THE “UNDECIDED”

# **POLAND AND THE CSDP: FROM WALES TO WARSAW WITH A STRATEGIC STOPOVER IN BRUSSELS**

Dominik P. JANKOWSKI

In security policy terms 2014 was unique for Europe. The Russian-Ukrainian conflict has once again altered the fate of European security as the forgotten notion of war was restored into the political discourse. The entire European security architecture has trembled as the eastern flank of the continent has been destabilised. In fact, Russia has confirmed its predictable status of a revisionist power. In this context, a new priority setting in security policy was a necessity.

From a Polish perspective, the NATO summit in Wales correctly addressed a new security reality. The Alliance has started to refocus on its core mission and the decision to strategically enhance its eastern flank was reached. Currently, a full, swift and firm implementation of the NATO summit conclusions, especially the Readiness Action Plan, remains a priority.

However, on NATO's road from Wales to Warsaw (where the next meeting of the heads of state and government takes place in 2016) there is a strategic stopover in Brussels – June 2015 European Council – which will be dedicated to defence. The Russian-Ukrainian conflict has considerably affected the CSDP highlighting its already diagnosed shortfalls and limitations. As underlined in the new Polish National Security Strategy, adopted on November 5, 2014, 'further evolution of the CSDP depends on the progress of integration processes within the EU, intensification of collaboration between the EU and NATO, political will to build defence capabilities, and active operational involvement of the EU in its neighbourhood'.<sup>22</sup>

The current geopolitical turbulence in Eastern Europe offers a chance to set the priorities right and to anchor the CSDP in a broader set of instruments which could help to confront the Russian challenge to a rules-based order. Four recommendations for Europeans come to the fore:

Improve cooperation with NATO. Both organisations should search for additional synergies as they have no interest in accommodating a revisionist power in their eastern neighbourhood. Moreover, both the EU and NATO should aim at orchestrating their response to Russian 'hybrid warfare', being a combination of military and non-military, conventional and irregular components. Enhanced strategic

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<sup>22</sup> Government of Poland (2014) 'National Security Strategy of the Republic of Poland'. See: [http://www.bbn.gov.pl/ftp/dok/NSS\\_RP.pdf](http://www.bbn.gov.pl/ftp/dok/NSS_RP.pdf).

communications, coordinated exercises and the prioritising of cybersecurity could constitute a starting point.

Renew financial commitment to defence. The world will neither be safer nor more just if Europe disarms. On the contrary, future generations of European citizens would likely face an international environment less amenable to both their socio-economic and security needs. Therefore, the EU should not exclude a creation of a defence pledge on its own. In fact, it could be based on an innovative formula going beyond a single indicator based on a GDP target.

Remain operationally engaged. Missions and operations are a powerhouse of the CSDP. EU should continue to focus its security efforts on its neighbourhood, yet, rebalance the operational presence and boost its engagement in Eastern Europe. Moreover, a security sector reform could evolve into a trademark EU contribution. The EU Advisory Mission for Civilian Security Sector Reform in Ukraine (EUAM Ukraine) is a perfect example how to effectively use a comparative advantage of the CSDP toolbox.

Finalise the development of an inclusive defence sector. The Russian-Ukrainian conflict proves that as much as ever Europe needs a competitive and robust defence sector that will provide for European needs without any disturbance in times of crisis. Yet, any initiatives aiming at strengthening the European defence sector should take into account not only economic, but foremost security factors. In such circumstances, preserving the sovereign right to protect security interests by applying Article 346 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU remains a priority. Moreover, bearing in mind the differences between military potentials in Europe Poland supports inclusivity, balance and fair participation of all member states and relevant parties in the restructuring of the European defence sector. In addition, Poland currently considers joining the Lol Treaty which was signed in 2000 by six countries (France, Germany, Italy, Spain, Sweden and the UK) to create the necessary measures to facilitate the restructuring of the European defence industry.

How can the CSDP be best described in 2015 from a Polish perspective? Many policy wonks prefer Twitter over Facebook as it offers a tailored tool to engage in the heated social media debates. It seems to be faster and more acute. On the other hand, Facebook provides its users with more options and does not limit the posts to 140 signs. If NATO can be compared to Twitter than the CSDP can be best depicted as one of the Facebook functions. From a diplomatic perspective, both tools are essential and play a complementary role.



# THE CSDP IS A REMOTE CONCEPT IN POLAND

Jacek BARTOSIAK

Given the current overriding concern stemming from the conflict in Ukraine the CSDP seems to be a remote concept in the internal security debate in Poland. This is aggravated by the clearly geopolitical deviation of security interests among the EU members along various lines: southern members vs. eastern members, Russian threat perception and the role of US involvement in European matters. The main and palpable concern in Poland is the German approach towards Russian policy and the relatively soft handling of the crisis by NATO.

Therefore the CSDP itself seems to be of far lesser relevance as there is a common perception here that the EU is lacking any cohesive international and security agenda at all and that – with some minor exceptions – German national and economic interests have become its main driving force. In addition, there is a deepening mistrust as to the respective roles of the countries in the CSDP decision-making process and force structure. Simply put, Poland does not want to deprive itself of its own all-utility armed forces destined to counter a conventional, symmetrical aggression from Russia. As a contrast – a few years ago even the conservative politicians were making public statements about the need to fund and field a strong European army and that Poland should constitute a major contributor to that army given Poland's size, population, military capabilities and geographical location. Now those days are gone and the modernisation programme for the Polish Armed Forces is all about being more independent and capable of defending the country on Poland's own. So is the new security doctrine announced recently.

Polish experts have initiated debate on the military shortcomings of the European allies translating into mistrust as to whether the European allies will have resolve, political will, and sufficient capabilities to come to Poland's aid under the framework of Article 5 of the Washington Treaty should such need arise. As regards the United States, the security experts realize that the US is to face huge defence cuts in the coming years and is more absent militarily in Europe than ever since 1948. It is also broadly accepted that the US is rebalancing towards Asia-Pacific for good and that this trend can only be accelerated as this is a requirement of strategic proportion in order to sustain the US global supremacy. Finally, the debate focuses more on the capabilities of particular countries to contribute to the security challenges than the CSDP as the combined effort of the members.

For Poland the CSDP matters only inasmuch as it helps this way or another prevent or mitigate the Russian resurgence and provide political or military assistance in the event of any hostilities or Russian actions against Poland or Baltic countries. If the EU

were to become an organisation with a real international agenda and, most importantly, one decision making centre that serves Polish security interests then Poland would be more than happy to welcome the real CSDP of an even more ambitious scale and real military capabilities. But this is pure theory given the current obvious rift within the EU between particular members on Russia, the US role in Europe and even on the future of EU, compounded by the general relative decline of the EU as a strong international actor on security matters. The main obstacle barring the CSDP to materialise is the tangled net of often mutually conflicting national security interests of the main EU players that make others doubt whether the whole CSDP idea is worth attention and resources.

# THE NETHERLANDS AND THE CSDP

Ton VAN OSCH

Dutch prosperity largely depends on international trade and thus on a stable international environment. It therefore should not be a surprise that, besides the protection of Dutch and allied territory and support to civil authorities, one of the constitutional missions of the Dutch Armed Forces is to contribute to international law and order. The word 'contribute' implies that this cannot be done in isolation. Dutch security policy therefore has a strong emphasis on international cooperation within NATO, the EU, the UN and the OSCE. Of these, NATO is still seen as 'the cornerstone' for ultimate military security. A credible collective defence largely depends on the transatlantic link and NATO is instrumental to the interoperability of allies' armed forces. But The Netherlands also recognises the shifting global balance of power with the US focusing more than before on Asia. Europe, and therefore also The Netherlands, will increasingly have to protect its own interests. Though NATO will remain a cornerstone for Dutch security, we can see an increasing importance of the EU's CSDP as well.

The Dutch focus on international stability also stimulated thinking on other dimensions of stability like human rights, good governance and economic development. The Netherlands was therefore one of the first countries which implemented a 3D (Defence, Diplomacy and Development) approach to crisis management. It also pushed this idea in NATO, but recognises that the EU is more suited for such a concept with even more instruments for crisis management than the three D's. The Netherlands therefore strongly supports the EU's concept for a Comprehensive Approach to crisis management, especially for prevention, peace-keeping and post-conflict stabilisation. CSDP, including the military, must be part of such a concept. This does not exclude the use of the military for higher intensity options like peace-making or even common defence if member states so decide.

In times of high prosperity the public lost sight of the idea that contributions to international stability are directly linked to the national interest. That is not a problem in a period of high prosperity in which we easily can afford contributions to international stability. But, as we see now, this changes in times of economic crises. The public focus has shifted towards more self-interest. A majority started to perceive support to international stability as just a costly ideal. As a result we saw decreasing budgets for diplomacy, development cooperation and – most dramatically – defence.

There is a clear gap between public opinion and policy-makers, who do understand that there cannot be national prosperity without international security, that this

should be created in a common effort and that each country has to take its fair share of the burden. Defence, diplomacy and development cooperation are essential instruments for the protection of our interests. The latest Dutch White Paper on Defence has a title with that message: 'In the interest of The Netherlands.' The paper stresses the need for more cooperation between European countries and gives a balanced coordinating role to both NATO and the EU. 'A strong EU is in NATO's interest.'

The creation of standing European Forces is not a feasible option yet, but cooperation within clusters of countries is. In these clusters each country should deliver military modules in such a way that the withdrawal of a module by one country does not deny other countries to use their modules. This is the best way to find efficiency and at the same time keep national flexibility for nations to use their forces under different command structures, including NATO or the EU. The Netherlands has already made many steps in permanent cooperation with other countries. Examples are: the Naval HQ BENELUX, the UK/NL Amphibious Force, the German Netherlands High Readiness HQ and the Dutch Air Mobile Brigade under permanent German division command. The Netherlands is a member of the C-17 Strategic Airlift Capability, the EATC and the European Gendarmerie Force and is lead nation for the European Air-to-Air Refuelling project. These are all examples of a kind of permanent structured cooperation, without making use of the formal possibility for this in the Treaty of Lisbon. The Netherlands is open to new initiatives, but is realistic in its expectations. International cooperation is complex, takes time and the costs generally precede the benefits.

In the mean time, The Netherlands cannot fully meet its international obligations. If we exclude VAT, the percentage for Dutch Defence expenditure goes under 1% of the GDP, so far below the NATO agreed 2%. If we would translate the Dutch percentage for common funding in the EU into a military contribution to the EU's ambition of 60,000 troops, The Netherlands would not be able to sustain its fair share.

Still, it should be noted that within its limited defence budget The Netherlands has developed high quality armed forces which are usable for a broad array of tasks. But with the current budget it is not possible to deliver those forces with the necessary sustainability. Given the growing number of crises in our neighbourhood and the US' shift in security focus, there is a growing acknowledgement that it is necessary to reinvest in the Armed Forces. A first promising step has been a yearly € 100 million compensation of the huge reductions over the last decade. But this by far does not lead to a fair level of burden sharing yet. The next step therefore should be to convince the public that indeed both NATO and the EU's CSDP are essential for national prosperity and The Netherlands has to take its fair share of the common burden.

# TURMOIL AND HYBRID WARFARE: THE NETHERLANDS AND THE CSDP

Frank BEKKERS

International relations are in turmoil. The international system is changing in some profound and often contradictory ways and in a number of different and often diverging directions. There is an ongoing global power shift from 'west' to 'east'. A less clear, but as far-reaching trend is that power becomes more widely distributed, more accessible, and more fleeting, without losing amplitude. As *Financial Times* columnist Philip Stephens wrote, '[t]he founding assumption of the post cold war settlement was that global economic integration would drive closer political cohesion. In today's post, post cold war order, economic and political nationalism are marching together in the opposite direction.'<sup>23</sup> These trends lead to a high degree of turbulence and uncertainty. Some sort of multi-polar or even 'post-polar' world order is in the making. We witness a 'return of geopolitics' with explicit great power rivalry. Various regions in the east and to the south-east and south of Europe find themselves in a grey zone between war and peace, where state and non-state actors interact in complex ways in clashes of interest and struggles for power.

Within this context it is right that the Netherlands has stressed that Europe should take more responsibility for its security. Two accentuations are important. First, focus should be on the 'ring of instability' surrounding Europe. Second, the Netherlands is an active advocate of the 'comprehensive approach'. Transnational threats such as international terrorism and drug and human trafficking can only be tackled in an international context. This requires a good balance between diplomatic, development, economic measures (e.g. sanctions) and the employment of military, police, judicial and intelligence capabilities. In addition, the cooperation with non-state actors such as NGOs and think tanks must be intensified. Finally, in the international network society, close cooperation with businesses is critical. Issues like mitigating the consequences of climate change, protecting critical infrastructure or securing energy supply and transport routes all require public-private approaches. This comprehensive approach is a central theme in Dutch foreign policy.

The CSDP is an important part of this comprehensive approach. Indeed, in a recent letter to Parliament on the International Security situation, the Dutch government calls for 'a strengthening and deepening of the [CSDP], a greater risk sharing and

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<sup>23</sup> Stephens, P. (2014) "Fragmentation" and "Identity" are Reshaping the World', *Financial Times*, (18 Dec). See: <http://www.ft.com/intl/cms/s/0/d77395b6-8561-11e4-ab4e-00144feabdc0.html?siteedition=uk#axzz3SgYX-nDsE>.

burden-sharing of the European countries within NATO and strengthening of the defence cooperation within Europe.’<sup>24</sup> Looking specifically at military cooperation, two observations stand out. First, international military cooperation is, in the words of minister Hennis, ‘not a choice but a necessity’. Over the past decade, the Netherlands has developed a pragmatic approach to the sovereignty issue. Forms of cooperation which increase the ability of states to act do not infringe on national sovereignty, but may actually contribute to it. Second, both policy and practice are geared towards case-by-case, goal and result oriented military cooperation initiatives with a limited number of likewise nations. Multilateral structures such as CSDP may provide a framework and suggest norms, but have limited practical impact on these predominantly bottom-up processes.

The context in which CSDP is developing is crucial for any understanding of the future of the policy and the Netherlands’ place in it. Major state actors have begun to use the strategy and techniques of asymmetric warfare applied by terrorist organisations, guerilla groups and other non-state actors facing state actors that possess an overwhelming surplus of military power. ‘Hybrid warfare’ is used as a, somewhat unfortunate – unfortunate because the term ‘war’ echoes the old dichotomy between war and peace which is not very helpful in understanding today’s dynamics in international relations –, label to designate this application of non-conventional means, next to more traditional diplomatic and military instruments of power, by state actors against other state actors in interstate rivalry or conflict.

Hybrid warfare is loosely defined as a military strategy that blends conventional warfare, irregular warfare, economic warfare and cyber warfare. Carl von Clausewitz’s maxim ‘War is not merely a political act but a real political instrument, a continuation of political intercourse, a carrying out of the same by other means’ is very much applicable to hybrid warfare. The ‘means’ may include cyber attacks; economic sanctions; covert operations and support to separatists; criminal and subversive activities; deployment of foreign direct investments, state-owned enterprises and sovereign wealth funds; media campaigning and use of social media; and strategies aimed at dividing the opposition. As responses are likely to be asymmetric, operations are not limited to one theatre. For example, sanctions could be answered by cyber attacks on the coercer’s banks.

Of course, many interstate confrontations of the past have had both conventional and unconventional force components. However, in most conflicts, these different components occurred in different theatres and in distinctly different formations. In hybrid warfare, these components become blurred into the same strategy, effort and battlespace. In hybrid warfare, the adversary presents unique combinational

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<sup>24</sup> Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken (2014) ‘Turbulent Times in Unstable Surroundings: Policy Letter on International Security’. See: <http://www.government.nl/news/2014/11/14/government-further-defines-international-security-policy.html>.

threats specifically designed to target 'our' – e.g. EU and NATO – vulnerabilities. Russia's annexation of the Crimea and its interferences in eastern Ukraine is a clear example of this. The accumulation of Russian troops near Ukraine's eastern borders in the second half of 2014, for example, was probably never intended for a full scale military invasion as some feared, but served as a deterrent and a distraction for the actual campaign conducted with 'other means'.

This development is fundamental but is the CSDP up to these challenges? Europe should shake of its naiveté and drastically change its thinking about international security, both in terms of an increased scope of its security interests and of a much more comprehensive, whole of government and whole of society, approach to uphold these interests. The Dutch and European policy community must formulate robust guiding principles for dealing with the growing challenge of hybrid warfare threats; and possibly utilise some of the strategic principles of hybrid warfare to promote its own security interests. Given the shifts in international politics and the challenge from hybrid warfare, what is now required is a new comprehensive approach, not geared toward instability and intrastate conflict, but to interstate rivalry and conflict. The Netherlands, along with European partners, needs to develop the CSDP in this direction if Europe is to maintain its interests and power.

# HOW SWEDEN VIEWS THE CSDP

Oscar JONSSON

Sweden has a deeply ingrained idea of neutrality that goes hand-in-hand with a certain degree of anti-NATO and anti-US sentiments. Against this backdrop, the CSDP provided a more politically viable instrument for defence cooperation. Consequently, Sweden has been one of the states placing most effort in the construction of a strong CSDP and particularly the less-controversial civilian aspects of it. Nonetheless, after the military intervention in Libya 2011, where the EU was barely considered, it became clear that CSDP was for most practical purposes dead. This led to some soul-searching in Sweden and a drift closer to NATO.<sup>25</sup>

In 2013, Sweden offered substantial forces to NATO's response force and a host-nation agreement that will allow NATO to practice territorial defence in Sweden. Simultaneously, the public opinion of NATO in Sweden is more positive than ever; the first reports of a majority in favour of joining the alliance came in November.

In this way, it rather looks like closer cooperation with NATO is more important for solving the most pressing security problems facing Sweden where Russia takes the first place. A recent Swedish government report concluded that Sweden does not have any defence cooperation that substantially increases the defence capacity and that it cooperates so closely with NATO it cannot avoid being identified with the Alliance. This is as clear as can be about the current prospects of CSDP in taking this role.

However, CSDP retains a unique competence in crisis management, especially related to civilian capacities, and for that reason it will remain important. Furthermore, as the response to the invasion of Ukraine has shown, the EU still has a lot of leverage when it comes together.

Nonetheless, the drift away from CSDP will also be more notable with the new Social-democratic government. Whereas Carl Bildt's foreign policy put its focus on the European project, the Social Democrats will redirect this to the UN and Nordic cooperation.<sup>26</sup> When it comes to the latter, NORDEFCO has been the key framework for cooperation, rather than the PSC, and it is likely to remain that way.

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<sup>25</sup> Jonsson, O. (2014) 'Sweden and NATO: getting closer?', *European Geostrategy*, (1 Jul). See: <http://www.europeangeostrategy.org/2014/07/sweden-nato-getting-closer/>.

<sup>26</sup> Jonsson, O. (2014) 'Sweden's new government, NATO and Russia', *European Geostrategy*, (19 Oct). See: <http://www.europeangeostrategy.org/2014/10/swedens-new-government-nato-russia/>.



To conclude, Sweden will keep working with the CSDP where it can but the days of strong Swedish leadership are probably gone. Rather, the Swedish security and defence policy needs to orientate itself to focus less on what could be promising in the future to what actually increases the defence capability.

# PORTUGAL AND THE CSDP

Carlos BRANCO

After the 25 April 1974 revolution that put an end to the 48-year old dictatorial regime in Portugal, and a 13-year counterinsurgency war fought in three African Theatres of Operations (Angola, Mozambique and Guinea-Bissau), the new democratic leadership turned its eyes to the European Communities (EC). With the empire gone, it was time for new geopolitical choices. First, and after intense negotiations, Portugal joined the EC on 1 January 1986 along with Spain. This foreign policy choice became Portugal's first priority, as did eventual membership of the WEU four years after EC accession.

Since then, Portugal has engaged in the security and defence developments of the European project. Lisbon has used the European CSDP as an instrument to amplify its voice in the international arena, and to mitigate its position as a small and peripheral state.

Despite their limited influential capacity, Portuguese authorities tried to catch up and be a part of the process in a constructive manner, avoiding marginalisation. Since the creation of the CFSP Portugal has allied itself with the group of Atlanticist nations, where it has tried to avoid initiatives that could have a negative impact on the EU's relations either with NATO or the US.

There has been a consensus in the Portuguese political elite that the CSDP should not be conducted at the expense of the country's relationship with NATO, which has been seen as the backbone of its national security and defence. This will be a permanent feature of Portugal's involvement in European security and defence matters. NATO has been perceived by the political elites as a natural extension of the country's alliance with the world's maritime power – the US. Portugal has had a bilateral defence agreement with the US since 1951, which allows US troops to use Lages Air Base (Azores archipelago), in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean.

However, the preservation of transatlantic relations has not been seen in Lisbon as an obstacle to the affirmation of the EU as a political actor. The prevailing consensus on the need to keep the guarantees provided by NATO in Europe's defence did not hinder Portuguese support for the creation of an European defence and security pillar; so long as the CSDP is oriented to interventions in conflicts where NATO or, to be more precise, the Americans are not involved in. The argument has been that NATO and CSDP should be complementary projects.

Furthermore, Portugal belongs to the group of states that do not want security and defence transformed into a supranational domain; decision-making in security

matters should follow an intergovernmental approach, in order to allow the possibility to veto decisions that could be detrimental to its national interests. The development of CSDP has been politically welcomed since it does not affect the fundamental premises of its sovereignty.

Such a solution has been perceived as a better way for the country to protect its interests and historical links, namely on issues related to its former colonies, now organised around the Community of Portuguese Speaking Countries, known in Portuguese as the CPLP.

The participation of Portugal in CSDP has also been strongly linked with its key interests in the Lusophone world. This explains why Portugal has shown a special interest in participating in CSDP missions and operations in African countries. National expertise in African matters, most notably in sub-Saharan issues, makes Portugal a privileged interlocutor in the dialogue between EU and Africa.

In what concerns neighbourhood policies, Portugal has prioritised issues related to the southern border of the EU, in detriment of those occurring on the eastern border. Recent political and military developments in the former are increasingly worrying the Portuguese authorities, particularly those in Libya, where Lisbon considers that the EU has a major role to play, and more should have been done. In the latter, it has followed a reactive rather than a pro-active line.

Foreign policy imperatives 'obliged' Portugal to engage in both NATO and CSDP fronts, which for a country with limited means, has been a challenge that requires careful management of resources to balance requests from both organisations. Nonetheless, under the CSDP, Portugal has contributed with manpower to the Headline Goals, actively participated in the elaboration of the Security and Defence provisions of the Lisbon Treaty, and has taken part in most CSDP operations and missions.

Moreover, outside the EU framework and jointly with other EU nations, Portugal took a series of initiatives in support of the CSDP. In 1995, the ministers of defence of Portugal, Spain, France and Italy agreed to create the EUROFORCES with a land (EUROFOR) and maritime (EUROMARFOR) component, which, while initially designed for the EU, could be employed in UN, NATO or OSCE led operations.

Additionally, in September 2004 Portugal together with France, Italy, The Netherlands and Spain agreed to create a multinational Police Force (EUROGENDFOR) aimed at improving the EU's crisis management capabilities in vulnerable areas. This initiative followed the 2000 Nice Summit, where the concepts of engagement of Police Forces were defined, most notably in the domain of reinforcing local police capabilities to maintain public order. Furthermore, Portugal has actively been participating in the development of the EU Battlegroups.

Priority given to participation either in EU or NATO-led operations has changed according to domestic and international contexts. Except for a short period of time, national authorities normally preferred to allocate their assets to NATO. That has been evident through the long and uninterrupted involvement in the two most important NATO missions deployed in Afghanistan and Kosovo, i.e., ISAF and KFOR.

As far as CSDP operations and missions are concerned, Portugal has played an active role in operations since its inception, accomplishing the objective of being part of the group of countries that head the advancement of the European defence and security venture. Over the past few years, Portugal has participated in many CSDP missions and operations, but in most cases with symbolic contributions, except for the CSDP anti-piracy operation Atalanta off Somalia's coast, as well as EUTM missions in Somalia and Mali.

Since 2003, Portugal has spent approximately 70% of its budget on missions abroad in NATO-led missions, while only 18% has been spent on CSDP-led operations and missions. Such contributions have been greatly strained since the economic austerity brought on the country after 2010 following the financial crisis. With defence spending of 1.1% or so of the GDP (below the 2% target set by NATO), national participation in crisis management operations, in the framework of international organisations (e.g. Portugal has only contributed two people to UN operations since December 2013), has been tremendously challenging.

In sum, we believe that in the short and medium term no radical changes will occur in the way in which the Portuguese authorities approach CSDP. The recent NATO Summit held a few months ago in Wales just reinforces this view. NATO will remain crucially important to Portuguese defence and security, and the CSDP will continue to be regarded as a complement to the Atlantic Alliance. Portugal will keep striving to preserve a leading role in the facilitation of CSDP relations with Africa. And last but not least, Portugal will keep its reservations on the EU policy towards the Southern frontier of the EU and the inadequate importance given so far to the developments taking place in this region.

# **CONFUSED AND DIVIDED: CZECH FOREIGN AND SECURITY POLICY IN THE EU**

Tomas WEISS

At first sight, the Czech Republic is a steadfast member of the two main European security organisations, the EU and NATO. Since the breakdown of the communist regimes in Central and Eastern Europe, the Czechs made it clear that they considered themselves part of the West, which took shape in rather quick and more or less smooth accession into both NATO and the EU. As a member of these two organisations the Czech Republic took an active part in various cooperation programmes and contributed to many military and civilian missions – in the Balkans, in South Caucasus, in Afghanistan and even in Africa.

The first sight might be a little misleading in this case, though. The quick and smooth accession concealed the fact that there never was a real debate on foreign and security policy aims and priorities in the Czech Republic. The country's politicians and administrations did their homework in order to join the two groupings, but never really agreed on what to do with the membership. As a result, Czech foreign policy may often seem a little patchy and inconsistent.

Particularly in relation to the EU, the ignorance of the politicians and the disinterest of the population and the media allowed for the topic to be hijacked by the former president Václav Klaus. Klaus managed to set the debate on the EU by arguments that mixed together relevant criticism of some aspects of the integration process with complete rubbish. There was nobody among Czech politicians, however, who would be ready to stand up against the president and prove him wrong. As a result, the general debate on the EU has been simplified to mere labels of 'Euro-toadies' (supporters of the EU) and 'Euro-realists' (critics of more or less anything that originates in the EU) without addressing the substance.

This context is necessary to understand the Czech approach to the Common Security and Defence Policy over the past few years. Being rather suspicious originally, the Czech Republic belonged to the group of states that worried about the CSDP's potential impact on NATO's and the United States' commitment to Europe. The majority of the civil service and conservative politicians in power shared the view that NATO must remain the anchor of Czech security policy and the CSDP is not worth taking the risk of undermining Atlantic cooperation. The Czech Republic did not ignore the CSDP altogether. The Czechs participated in missions that were deployed in areas of Czech interest, particularly in the Balkans, but the CSDP was considered a secondary policy, an attachment to the real focus of security policy in NATO. The Czech Republic did

not actively block the development of the CSDP, but was surely not a leader of or an active participant in the process.

The decision of the Obama administration to cancel the plans for the third site of ballistic missile defence system in the Czech Republic in 2009 provoked the civil service and some of the conservative politicians into a re-assessment of current policies. The American decision, which was interpreted in the context of the reset of US relations with Russia and the announced 'Asian pivot', led to a warming-up of the Czech Republic to the CSDP. The most visible result was the Czech decision to contribute to the EUTM in Mali, despite the fact that Czech foreign policy had not been interested in the region – a contribution which was hailed both in the EU and in the domestic expert debate as a sign that the Czech Republic has finally understood the importance of the CSDP.

In fact, the decision to deploy to Mali was not a result of any significant political debate or any shift in Czech political and public approach to the EU. Although approved by the parliament, the deployment was promoted by a joint effort of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Defence and the Czech military leadership without significant political backing or public debate. The political class remained disinterested and probably did not even appreciate the significance of the step.

Today, Czech security policy remains as irrelevant for the political and public debate as before. Foreign policy issues, even the most important ones, such as the war in Ukraine, remain perceived primarily through domestic political lenses by most politicians, including the social democratic prime minister. The second biggest governmental party, which nominated the current minister of defence, did not even have any foreign or security policy programme in last year's elections. As a result, the Czech centre-left government is unable to formulate clear positions and ensure that the Czech Republic speaks with one voice externally, being under pressure from the president who promotes his own (rather opaque) political agenda and from disputes between and even within governmental parties. The distorted public debate on the EU further complicates the issue, because the confused public is unable to distinguish allies from foes and outright lies from likely truths.

There is a much better defined position in the civil service, which sees the CSDP as an important and useful tool for the stabilisation of the EU's neighbourhood, even though not the key or even emerging platform that would ensure Czech (and European) security. Without the political assignment, however, the Czech Republic is unable to shape the CSDP actively. The Czechs will not hamper further development and they can be expected to contribute modestly to future missions. The prevailing lack of interest in foreign and security policy among the Czech political representation and inability to identify cross-party priorities (well documented by the recent failure to reach an agreement on the stabilisation of the defence budget) will preclude the Czech Republic from becoming a policy-shaper any time soon.

# REFOCUSING CSDP: A LITHUANIAN PERSPECTIVE

Margiris ABUKEVICIUS

I live in a very nice neighbourhood. Our family moved here 11 years ago. The first 6 houses in this area were built more than 60 years ago. Now it has grown into a community of twenty-eight households, and there is some extra space for a few more homes to be built. This neighbourhood has always been an example to others. It is a nice area to live and, which is more important, we are a strong community. We meet often and solve problems together. The only concern I have is that we do not pay enough attention to what is happening outside our neighbourhood (growing criminality, new constructions). In terms of security, we rely too much on a security company and do not invest enough to increase our own security measures.

What is even more important, however, is that we have been ignoring a new big construction going on outside our neighborhood. Our house is next to the fence and being directly affected by those developments we have been trying to draw the attention of our neighbours for several years already. But we have not found much support. And only now have things have started to change slowly. When it became clear that the new developer is actively looking for ways to buy houses in our neighbourhood, and openly says that the ultimate goal is to rebuild the area, we are starting to realise that our welfare and way of life is being challenged.

Indeed, the real test for the EU's credibility as a security actor will be its response to Russia's aggression. Russia is not a political or economic but a fundamental long-term security challenge. It is clear that the EU will not be able to respond to that challenge on its own (nor should it). NATO is a key player here, especially when it comes to the reassurance measures for its members and deterrence against conventional threats. It is also clear that many effective tools that the EU possesses to influence Russia's behaviour and to shape the neighbourhood are not related to security or defence.

The EU should not overestimate political, economic and regulatory power in its external relations, yet EU member states have to start thinking about security and defence seriously; just as they do being members of NATO. It does not mean that the EU should replace NATO (rather the contrary). It simply means that the EU's external action should have a strong security and defence component; that security and defence should be mainstreamed in other EU policies. The CSDP should therefore be a part of wider strategic considerations.

The CSDP has just celebrated its 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary but the Policy is still in the initial phase of its development. From the beginning the CSDP was designed as a small out of area crisis management instrument, but now there is the major problem that the

EU countries are not able to develop a more ambitious defence policy. True, EU member states' cooperation under the NATO umbrella proves this claim wrong, but it is rather the lack of a vision (or conflicting visions) and a stimulus to further develop CSDP that is troublesome. On top of this, the December 2013 European Council missed the opportunity to answer an important question: what is the CSDP for? Instead, the heads of government and state focused on an economic/austerity driven agenda that focused on the competitiveness of the defence industry, cooperative defence programmes and wider synergies with other policies (even though such initiatives are important).

Answering why Europe needs a CSDP does not just entail a theoretical or academic discussion, as any answers would directly influence our decisions on security and defence capabilities, structures and finances. Indeed, the EU is neither as prosperous nor as secure as the European Security Strategy implies and the CSDP is a product of a by-gone era; it is currently not fit to respond to the challenges of today. At the June 2015 European Council it is becoming more evident that the heads of state and government will mandate the revision of the European Security Strategy. Yet any revision should not lose its security focus. The EU is facing a number of security challenges: conventional and hybrid threats, including the so-called emerging challenges (cyber, energy), as well as radicalism outside and inside the EU. All of these threats need to be addressed in the new strategy.

Any new strategy will need to refocus CSDP. Firstly, the Policy should help develop defence partnerships with countries such as Ukraine, Georgia and Moldova but it should do so by offering comprehensive assistance in security sector reform rather than just the traditional agenda of operations and training. Secondly, CSDP needs to be embedded in the EU's response to hybrid threats by linking EU-NATO efforts in the cyber, energy and strategic communication domains. Finally, the European Commission should continue to look for internal market, research and regulatory synergies but it should go further by opening up its funds for security and defence-related external assistance.

Lithuania and its eastern partners in the EU will be living in a turbulent neighbourhood for some time to come. Our community of twenty-eight households should be increasingly alarmed by what is going on in our neighbourhood. We can be reassured that there is a police force on hand to help in case of unlawful acts by the developer over the fence, but more is needed to strength the resilience of our community. NATO is a crucial element of Lithuanian security but the EU's CSDP has an important role to play too, and every member of the community should realise this before the bulldozers enter our street.



# THE “OUTSIDERS”

# BEING SMALL, ACTING TALL?

## MALTA AND EUROPEAN DEFENCE

Daniel FLOTT

The crisis that hit Libya in 2011 first affected Malta on the 21 February when two Libyan Mirage air force jets made an emergency landing at the international airport at Luqa. As the crisis in Libya worsened, Malta eventually provided safe-haven to approximately 8,000 foreigners from over 50 countries that had to be evacuated. As part of the EU, Malta contributed to efforts launched and sustained by the European Commission's DG ECHO by contributing financial and in-kind services such as plane repatriations, medical supplies, food and naval vessels worth €730,117 – therefore contributing more than Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Lithuania, Romania and Slovenia.<sup>27</sup> Malta was internationally commended for its role in the crisis, not just because it served as a hub for the evacuation efforts but also because it facilitated UN Resolution 1976 by opening its airspace to NATO forces. Former US Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton, termed Malta a key staging area for the relief and evacuation efforts during the Libya crisis.<sup>28</sup> Malta's response was indeed remarkable when one considers that it is one of the EU's smallest members and that its armed forces and emergency response forces are relatively small by European standards.

The Libya crisis was just one recent expression of greater Maltese self-confidence in crisis operations. Libya can be partly explained by geographical proximity, but Malta has also been engaged in a number of CSDP operations beyond its immediate sphere of interest – even though the country has constitutional neutrality. For example, in April 2010 a twelve-man special detachment team (C Special Duties Company) from the Armed Forces of Malta was deployed for four months onboard the MUSTAFA-H, a World Food Programme ship, to protect the vessel during her trip to northern Somalia. Staff officers from the AFM were also sent to the EUNAVFOR Operational Headquarters at Northwood, United Kingdom. Additionally, three trainers were sent to EUTM Somalia as part of the military training mission in 2008, and an AFM officer was seconded to EUTM Somalia's Mission Headquarters in Kampala in 2011. Two non-commissioned officers were sent to EUBAM Rafah in 2009, and in 2008 – as part of its first ever CSDP operation – Malta sent two personnel to the EUMM Georgia. During the Libya crisis in 2011 the AFM seconded staff to the EUFOR Libya Operational Headquarters in Rome.

<sup>27</sup> European Commission (2012) 'Fact Sheet Libya'. See: [http://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/aid/countries/libya\\_factsheet.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/aid/countries/libya_factsheet.pdf).

<sup>28</sup> Stagno-Navarra, K. (2011) 'Clinton lauds Malta as "regional authority"', *Malta Today*, (18 Oct). See: <http://www.maltatoday.com.mt/news/national/34548/clinton-lauds-malta-as-regional-authority#.VO2s9TqrdUQ>.

However, a great dose of reality is required when assessing Malta's involvement in the CSDP. Let us be frank, given the country's size and resources, its contributions to operations will be miniscule and it will never be in a position to launch and lead a CSDP mission – in defence terms Malta is but a drop in the ocean. Indeed, Malta does not even have a dedicated Ministry of Defence and in 2012 it had 1,510 military personnel; 97 civilian personnel; 20 troops deployed (a total of 1.3 per cent of its total military personnel); 105 deployable land forces; and 30 sustainable land forces. Even though this means that Malta's deployability rate<sup>29</sup> surpassed Cyprus in 2012 – incredible given that Cyprus' defence budget is much higher than Malta's – Malta is a dwarf in military terms. Yet Malta's involvement in the CSDP should not be completely overlooked for three main reasons.

Firstly, its geographical location puts it at the centre of any Mediterranean crises that may emerge in the future. For historical reasons Malta has declared itself a neutral state, but it increasingly recognises that it has a security role to play in the Mediterranean Sea. It will not become a NATO member anytime soon – although it is a member of the Partnership for Peace (PfP) –, and activists regularly denounce NATO naval stop-offs at Valletta as anti-constitutional. Until Malta recognises that its self-declared neutrality is a remnant of Cold War politics, it will feel comfortable playing just a minor role in the CSDP. Yet, due to its size and resources, Malta might always be accused of being a 'free rider' in the CSDP. Indeed, its neutrality and geography appear to move in different directions; neutrality would imply that the country did not have to invest in defence, whereas its geography indicates that it needs to play a greater role in managing potential crises that affect its national interests. The migration issue, and the resulting (repeated!) calls by Malta for greater EU resources and political support, highlights how necessary it is for Malta to play a greater role in security and defence policy.

Malta will never be in a position to spend ambitiously on defence, and it certainly will never own a naval fleet on a par with most of its fellow European states. The point, rather, is about using defence spending commitments to make a political statement and to ultimately overcome accusations of 'free riding'. Consider that in 2012 Malta spent a meager €39.3 million on defence or just 0.58 per cent of GDP – nowhere near the NATO 2 per cent average.<sup>30</sup> This amount can be broken down to reflect that the bulk of Malta's defence budget goes on personnel (€32 million) with €6.2 million being spent on operational and maintenance-related expenditure. Just €1.1 million was spent on infrastructure, investment and operational costs in 2012. More should be done to ensure that Malta lives up to the basic responsibilities bestowed upon it by geography, history and circumstance.

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<sup>29</sup> European Defence Agency (2015) 'Defence Data Portal'. See: <http://www.eda.europa.eu/info-hub/defence-data-portal>.

<sup>30</sup> European Defence Agency (2015) 'Defence Data of Malta in 2012'. See: <http://eda.europa.eu/info-hub/defence-data-portal/Malta/year/2012>.

Secondly, should a crisis in the Mediterranean occur then Malta might have a political, cultural and historical added value in dealing with crisis-hit countries. For example, after the Libya crisis the Maltese Chief of Defence and his Libyan counterpart met in February 2012 to discuss bilateral naval exercises with Libyan forces off the coast of Tripoli. Malta sent its Maritime Squadron Diciotti Class (P61) offshore patrol vessel and the exercises were made on explosive ordinance disposal, vessel protection, seamanship, vessel boarding techniques, diving, etc. Malta and Libya also agreed to an 88-week training programme for 33 Libyan military officials in order to develop border control and search, Operational Maritime Law and rescue capabilities conducted through Malta's Maritime Safety and Security Training Centre. In this sense, the skills of the AFM should not be underestimated as '[a]ll AFM officers and senior non-commissioned officers have attended courses abroad and have qualified at some of the best military academies and schools around the world.'<sup>31</sup> Indeed, not every EU member state would have been in a position to deal with the Libyan forces in such a manner – Malta's historical and political links to Libya mattered.

Thirdly, even though Malta plays an extremely minor role in CSDP operations, it has been able to develop its domestic crisis management response mechanisms. One should not forget that Malta is well-versed in maritime operations given the frequency with which refugees, asylum seekers and illegal immigrants arrive on Maltese shores. During the Libya crisis – a crisis which was largely unanticipated – AFM officers were following developments during the 'Arab Spring' and drew up contingency plans and a number of likely scenarios for a larger crisis.<sup>32</sup>

In the wake of the crisis Malta triggered a number of crisis mechanisms. Firstly, the then Maltese government established a special crisis operations command centre, operating on a 24/7 basis, which functioned as the nerve centre for the crisis response. A governmental contingency centre was then triggered within the Justice Ministry. The national hospital, *Mater Dei*, also activated its 'critical events procedure' – which is usually reserved for national emergencies – to deal with civilian and military casualties emanating from Libya. This response was accompanied by measures such as implementing a national emergency code system, an online resource mapping system, efficient staff rotas (to avoid fatigue and stress), psychological support for all staff, language experts, etc. It is incredible to think that, given Malta's size and resources, a crisis response mechanism was put in place that tangibly benefitted European and international efforts during the Libya crisis.

At the heart of Maltese debates about security and defence lie resources, geography and neutrality. Malta will never have the resources needed to be a big player in European defence, although it does use its expertise and added value where neces-

<sup>31</sup> Ruggier, I. (2012) 'Reaching Out: AFM Engagement with Libyan Armed Forces', *On Parade: Armed Forces of Malta*, pp. 9-10.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid*, p. 9.

sary and possible to play its part. In terms of operational commitment, therefore, Malta is not a free rider and it does try to act tall within its means; however, in terms of its defence spending it will, for the time being at least, look like a free rider. Malta cannot do anything about its geography but it can invest in equipment (vessels and aircraft) that can help it overcome geographical constraints. It is stuck at the heart of the Mediterranean and will therefore have to remain responsive to crises that will inevitably emanate from Africa. Perhaps here it should play a bigger political role in the EU Maritime Security Strategy, although much more EU financial support and solidarity is required. One Maltese politician recently said that it would be good for EUNAVFOR to deploy to the Mediterranean – such ideas are very welcome.<sup>33</sup> Indeed, other EU member states seem to forget that Malta is one of the EU's most crucial frontier states and will require assistance to meet its responsibilities.

Finally, Malta will need to continue its national debate over neutrality. Security and defence, by its very nature, is not neutral and Malta no longer finds itself in the midst of a Cold War. It has – by virtue of its EU membership – made a clear political statement that it is bound to the West. Additionally, crises are flaring up on Malta's doorstep: Libya remains in flames and the growing threat from ISIL in that country should not be overlooked. Malta does not need to surrender its neutrality to play its part in defeating a barbaric terrorist organisation, even if any role played by the country would be humanitarian rather than military. In this context, Malta should recognise that being a member of NATO's PfP does not guarantee the country any protection in the face of threats to its essential security (there is no Article 5 for Malta). True, under Article 42(7) of the Treaty on European Union (the "mutual defence clause") other EU member states are obliged to assist and aid Malta in the event of armed aggression on its territory. Yet building trust on defence matters means a country has to play its role when other countries are in need – it is a credibility issue. Being a security 'free rider' on other EU members reflects badly on Malta. Indeed, the country needs to recognise that it cannot haul up anchor and move to a safer place if things go bad so it should play its security role to the fullest, albeit within its means.

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<sup>33</sup> Malta Independent (2015) 'Roberta Metsola raises possibility of EU Naval Force in the Mediterranean', (12 Feb). See: <http://www.independent.com.mt/articles/2015-02-12/local-news/Roberta-Metsola-raises-possibility-of-EU-Naval-Force-in-the-Mediterranean-6736130495>.

# THE ABSENTEE: DENMARK AND THE CSDP

Sten RYNNING & Jon RAHBK-CLEMMENSEN

Denmark is the only EU member state that stands outside of the Union's CSDP, which explains why the CSDP plays an ambiguous role in Danish defence and security thinking. Staying out of any future EU defence cooperation schemes was one of the conditions that the large parliamentary majority in Copenhagen had to swallow to sway public opinion to stay within the EU after it had suffered a defeat in the 1992 Maastricht Treaty referendum. Denmark also stands outside of the euro and the common justice and home affairs policy, and Denmark cannot participate in the development of a common citizenship policy.

This special opt-out position is robust. Policy elites, including both the incumbent government and the leading opposition parties, favour joining the CSDP but polls give the no-side a handsome lead. When the government in 2000 sought to reverse the Euro (common currency) opt-out by referendum, it suffered a clear defeat. Danish policy elites have thus learned a hard lesson. But they are bracing for a new attempt to revise the opt-outs – this time in 2016 with a referendum on common justice and home affairs. If it results in a victory for the pro-EU parties, they might be encouraged to seek to reverse the CSDP opt-out soon thereafter, say, in 2018-2019. However, if the 2016 referendum goes south, a Danish CSDP entry is largely off the table for the next decade.

Denmark's self-inflicted absence from the CSDP is in many ways puzzling. The EU embraces all the crisis management and comprehensive security thinking that enjoys wide backing in Denmark. Moreover, the commitment to large scale development assistance (Denmark is among the highest contributors in the world when measured according to GDP) continues, and development and governance issues remained prominent throughout the hey-days of military activism – in the early 2000s when Denmark contributed forces to both the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Through these years of military activism, and even when casualty numbers ran high, the Danish public followed the lead provided by a largely unified parliamentary scene. The Danish military contribution mattered, parliamentarian leaders argued, a view the public endorsed to become one of the most bellicose in Europe. The only exception was the combat phase of the Iraq War – in early 2003 – when the parliamentary scene fragmented and public opinion divided. Interestingly, this intimate relationship between elite and public opinion does not exist in regard to the EU. Here, public opinion tends to defy the elite. The 2014 EU parliamentary elections saw the EU sceptic right-wing party – the Danish Peoples' Party – come out in front of the entire establishment.

The military reality is that the Danish armed forces long ago prepared for a new multi-national era. The Danish Armed Forces have completed a change from territorial defence to an expeditionary force, which is able and willing to participate in out-of-area combat missions. Denmark also supports the multinational trend at the level of command (with investments in NATO's Multinational Force North-East corps HQ) and defence planning (with support of NATO's Smart Defence, tacit support of the EU's attempt to open defence markets, and support for regional structures such as NORDEFCO). Of course, Denmark is as unwilling to sacrifice its national sovereignty as any other European state, which effectively brakes defence specialisation among countries, but the principle of multi-nationality is deeply entrenched nonetheless.

As long as the CSDP opt-out exists, though, there can be no multinationality on Denmark's part in respect to military work in the EU. If the EU takes on a military mission, Denmark is out. For a little while, during the Bush years when Atlanticism was the name of the game, it did not matter all that much. Now it does, and it is explicitly recognised in Copenhagen. Militarily speaking, Denmark has identified three key strategic partners – the United States, Britain and France. France, obviously, is a carrier of the CSDP. More broadly speaking, the Danish foreign minister has repeatedly singled out Germany as one of Denmark's absolute most important political partners. To make these partnerships work, Denmark will need to engage its partners fully in both NATO and the EU.

As mentioned, there is a political recognition of this condition, and there is some movement on the issue of revising the opt-outs. However, it is a slow motion train, and there is a risk that it will wreck once again in 2016.

# THE FUTURE OF CSDP



# EUROPEAN DEFENCE: MINILATERALISM IS NOT THE ENEMY

Vivien PERTUSOT

Many national perspectives published in this series share a similar analysis of the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP): it is underperforming and needs to be adapted. However, the willingness to devote resources to actually improve the Policy does not seem to be at the forefront of many national policies. Everyone agrees on the symptoms, but few, if any, are truly committed to curing the sicknesses. A like-minded series on NATO would have probably ended up with relatively similar conclusions.

Two reasons may explain this situation. First, it requires daunting resources and a great deal of credibility to champion this reform process and not many countries are capable and/or willing to take up that challenge. Second, in the face of problem-riddled institutions, momentous economic difficulties, and pressing needs to find alternatives, the past seven years have seen the resurgence of bilateral and minilateral frameworks outside traditional institutions. This article attempts to explain the reasons behind this growing trend, why they are not a passing phenomenon, and what they incur for CSDP and NATO.

Bilateralism and minilateralism are not foreign to the EU and NATO. The EU has written Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO) into the Lisbon Treaty, which has paved the way for a group of countries to take the lead on specific issues (article 44), and has embarked into pooling and sharing. NATO has been in this business for a long time. The acquisition of AWACS by twelve Allies in 1978 is minilateralism within a multilateral framework. This trend has continued since then and the decision to launch the Framework Nations Concept at the Summit last September is yet another evidence of it.

However, European countries seem to find many sources of dissatisfaction with multilateral organisations. Concerns are twofold: it takes time, energy and resources to reach a common agreement and implement decisions – sometimes too much; and the level-playing field within those consensus-driven organisations mean that divergent ambitions and capabilities among members tend to produce agreements on the lowest common denominator. Issues over control are another obstacle. Let us focus on two concrete issues: first, multilateral institutions tend to create frameworks, which offer little room for manoeuvre to participating countries even when they decide to engage in flexible formats. The PESCO for instance seems flexible enough, but in reality, the framework would need to follow specific rules, which may seem

too constraining. Second, national defence policies remain geared toward national ambitions, means and capabilities. For instance, the European Defence Agency has been trying to find ways to better coordinate national defence planning cycles, which would help to facilitate cooperation and seize opportunities. There is simply not enough incentives for participating member states to do so, especially considering the important reform process it would imply and the interests of various actors to curb.

However, cooperation among European countries has been blooming in other formats. Some of the pieces in the series referred to them. They include the Franco-British Lancaster House Treaties in 2010, the creation of NORDEFCO in 2009, the numerous bilateral and minilateral frameworks in which the Netherlands is involved in (such as the Belgian-Dutch maritime cooperation or the European Air Transport Command (EATC)), or various initiatives within the Visegrad group such as joint battlegroup or a possible joint defence planning process. It is remarkable that those frameworks can comprise operational, capability and industrial cooperation. There are far less taboos and posturing than within multilateral organisations.

Those frameworks include a tailor-made conception of what the cooperation's objectives and ambitions are, countries with relatively similar ambitions and capabilities, and in most cases previous patterns of cooperation. Most importantly, countries set the rules, assess progress, decide potential adjustments and are accountable only to themselves.

It does not mean that those frameworks are hassle-free: clashes of interests still break out, achievements still take time, disappointments still happen. Yet, those formats seem more convincing to countries, because they are better tailored to their needs and capacity, everything takes a bit less time, procedures are less bureaucratic, impulse to move forward is a bit higher and projects come to fruition a bit faster.

The EU and NATO can still play a role. However, it can only be positive if some pre-conditions are met. The most difficult one is to forsake the idea that they are 'the top' and countries are 'the down'. This reasoning is rooted in the idea that national defence efforts should advance a European-wide defence effort. CSDP and NATO are intrinsically integrationist, even if intergovernmental, but European countries are not ready to commit to that path and do not see institutions strong enough to carry this process forward anyway. This change of tune would also be required within member countries. National defence serves to protect national interests (at home or abroad), but most have decided that this objective will only take place through the EU, NATO or the UN. Guaranteeing that European armed forces remain capable is thus paramount. Many European countries feel the EU and NATO are not the only options possible to ensure that objective. Yet, they show far too little impulse to find ways for the institutions to assist them in bilateral and minilateral cooperation.

Both multilateral bodies and member countries need to adjust their stances. One of the most difficult issues for the EDA's pooling and sharing or for NATO's smart defence is that member countries do not fully see those institutions as simply supporting bodies despite their best efforts. The EDA has been trying to portray itself as a platform in the interests of its participating member states to conduct projects, identify opportunities and share information. However, those institutions are simultaneously sending mixed signals. For instance, NATO would like to further bind smart defence and the NATO Defence Planning Process (NDPP) so that smart defence projects serve the NDPP, which is a NATO-driven process. It does not encourage Allies to use NATO as a platform for their projects...

Trust is essential. Short of trust that institutions can help countries get the most out of their bilateral and minilateral frameworks, hesitation will prevail. And it will inevitably lead to initiatives conducted in silos. The role of the institutions could be to foster exchanges between those different clusters, provide expertise some countries may be lacking, and use their overarching vision of European capabilities to help them identify shortfalls and advise on options to remedy them. In some cases where many countries are interested to embark on a project – whether it be capability development or joint procurement – institutions can be seen as helpful honest brokers among many competing interests, especially since the devil often lies in the details in defence cooperation. That may concern smaller countries rather than the few remaining big ones.

CSDP and NATO will remain the main institutions through which to deploy in operations. But it does not mean cooperation on capability development, mutualisation, or joint procurement needs to be achieved through CSDP or NATO – the fact is it is not. So let's use CSDP and NATO to better support those clusters. Capabilities will remain in the hands of nation-states: without those capabilities, CSDP and NATO are pointless. It is not a problem if defence cooperation occurs outside the institutions – they may end up being more ambitious in size and scope. What is at stake here is not awarding ownership of European defence to a particular organisation but making sure that European countries remain capable in the years ahead. Output is the driving principle behind the minilateral cooperation – a principle many countries feel is too diffuse in multilateral organisations. What countries are striving for is to remain able to defend their territory (deter and act) and to deploy in operations where need be. And they know far too well that the decisions they make – or fail to – today bear momentous consequences on their ability to act in the future.

## EUROPEAN DEFENCE: ABOUT NEIGHBOURS AND DISTANT FRIENDS

Dick ZANDEE

Increasingly, European countries are deepening cooperation between their armed forces in bilateral or regional clusters. In most cases the driving factor is a lack of money. Capitals are forced to cooperate in order to maintain capabilities which they would lose if they continued alone. It seems logical that decreased budgets would drive them to Evere or Schuman Square in Brussels to cooperate with the widest possible group of partners in the EU or NATO. However, while some progress is being made in the pooling and sharing projects of the European Defence Agency and in the smart defence programme of the Alliance, deeper defence cooperation at the level of the twenty-eight turns out to be cumbersome and painful, if not impossible. There are many reasons for the lack of substantial progress on capability development in the EU and NATO – beyond the often used logical argument that it is inherently more difficult to agree with a larger number of players than just with one or two partners.

One explanatory factor is geography. Finland or the Baltic States, bordering Russia, have other primary security concerns than Italy or Spain who have to cope with huge flows of immigrants crossing the Mediterranean. Last year, a new record of about 200,000 boat migrants was set. History also comes into play. This is still most visible in the expeditionary and interventionist orientation of the former big colonial empires France and the UK. On the other hand Germany remains reluctant to play its full role in deploying forces, in particular in high-risk operations. The German political overtures at the 2014 Munich Security Conference have not been backed up by the Bundestag or the population. Other factors also come into play: language, culture and, certainly not least, past experience in military cooperation – they all make it easier or more difficult to cooperate across national borders. In this respect, defence is not much different from other sectors of public government, like law enforcement, education or environmental matters. In these areas practical cooperation between neighbouring countries is often more deeply and structurally developed than at the EU level.

This preference for cooperation among neighbours does not mean that defence cooperation in clusters is an easy game. The Franco-British Lancaster House Treaty is making progress in the nuclear area and with regard to its operational leg, the Combined Joint Expeditionary Force (CJEF) for crisis intervention. But once industry gets involved the pace is much slower. Yes, London and Paris have decided to buy the same anti-ship missile, but it will be produced by an already integrated European defence company, MBDA. With regard to future combat aircraft systems both

countries are working together on the drawing board, including at the industrial level. But for land systems, ships and other platforms armaments cooperation between the two countries proves to be difficult because national production lines are still protected.

The same argument comes into play in the Franco-German defence cooperation, which is primarily characterised by a record of declarations rather than by concrete results. Even the often praised Nordic Defence Cooperation (NORDEFCO) suffers from the same spoiling factor. The Norwegian decision to buy the F35 Joint Strike Fighter was in sharp contrast to the declared intent to invest in the same equipment and a slap in the face of the Swedes who had hoped to sell the improved Gripen to their neighbour. As a side-show the combined Norwegian-Swedish acquisition of Archer artillery pieces equally failed. The protection of national defence industries, which continues despite Directive 2009/81, provides the biggest stumbling block for common capability development and acquisition of the same equipment. Clusters do not escape from this reality.

More progress is made on the side of operational cooperation in clusters. Although it might look more difficult to integrate forces than to buy the same kit, in fact the opposite is true. National political-economic interests hardly play any role when it comes to military-to-military cooperation. But there are important prerequisites. Partners have to trust each other, they must have comparable organisational cultures and positive past experience in defence cooperation is also important. Equal size in terms of GNP, defence budgets and armed forces is not really required.

The German-Netherlands defence cooperation is developing well, with the integration of the 11th Dutch Air Mobile Brigade into the German Division Schnelle Kräfte as the most recent example. The next step will be the merging of the 43rd Mechanised Brigade of the Netherlands with the 1st Armoured Division of Germany. For the Dutch Army it offers the option of a return to using tanks, needed for operations high in the spectrum. Through clustering with the Germans, The Hague will rectify its 2011 decision to abandon all remaining Leopard 2 tanks. Also with regard to the Patriot missile system and in the naval sector both countries are striving for deeper defence cooperation.

The German-Netherlands example shows that different sizes of countries is not a show-stopper. On the contrary, smaller countries have an interest in cooperating with bigger countries as it will not only help to maintain but to increase their capacities. The Framework Nations Concept, developed in NATO at the initiative of Berlin, is based on this interest. For enablers even larger groups will work, as proven by the Strategic Airlift Capability (SAC) with 12 participating countries. Another example is the European Air Transport Command (EATC) which plans, task and controls the missions of about 200 transport and air-to-air refuelling aircraft of seven countries. When all A400M transport aircraft have been delivered the majority of them, some

140 planes, will be deployed under this multinational command. It only leaves the UK as a future A400M user out and perhaps London would have joined EATC if the 'E' letter had not been in the command's acronym....

Increased operational cooperation might help to overcome the more difficult obstacles for standardised equipment procurement. Most of the clusters have that challenge ahead, once low hanging fruit on increased cooperation in concepts, doctrine, training and exercises has been harvested. In particular, clusters which are integrating operational forces should now start to look at the next step, i.e. the harmonisation of their defence planning and armaments acquisition in the areas where operational needs already converge. Standardising equipment will not only prove beneficial for the forces – opening up huge potential for using each other's equipment and cut on test and evaluation facilities – but also allow for common maintenance, acquisition of spare parts and equipment upgrades. It is a win-win situation: better operational capabilities and more cost-efficient through-life equipment management.

International defence planning in NATO and the EU has failed. The NATO Defence Planning Process (NDPP) has rarely produced results in capability improvement. It is nothing more than an accountancy system of the defence plans of the member states. Rather than continuing the false image of a defence planning system, the Alliance should focus on what is needed and what goals member states might accept for a collective effort. NDPP should be replaced by NCMA: NATO Capability Monitoring and Assessment – a process in which the Alliance directs capability development by the member states through the setting of overall objectives, monitoring the results and assessing if they contribute to the Alliance's collective needs, in particular in addressing well-known shortfalls. The outcome should be more visible and of use in a political rather than a technical-bureaucratic way in order to create peer pressure.

The same would apply to the EU. With the Capability Development Plan, the Code of Conduct on Pooling and Sharing and other instruments the EDA has the in-house tools. Unfortunately, the EDA is too small to play its part properly. It suffers from a few participating member states opposing defence cooperation in the EU. The famous caveat 'on a voluntary base' is blocking each attempt to create a system of peer pressure and to start measuring if and how member states are closing European capability gaps. The new Policy Framework for more systematic and long-term defence cooperation, approved by EU Defence Ministers in November 2014, suffers from the same shortcoming. Perhaps clusters could help to overcome these political obstacles by showing that in smaller groups progress can be made in common long-term defence planning. This might serve as an example for others.

The slow progress with European defence cooperation stands in clear contrast to the quickly deteriorating security environment in the East and the South. It should be a

wake-up call for all EU and NATO member countries, not just those close to the periphery. Equally, all of them have the obligation to contribute, not only in terms of declarations on solidarity but also with real capabilities. An old Dutch proverb reads 'Better a good neighbour than a distant friend'. Capabilities can be maintained and improved more quickly and effectively in clusters of close neighbours than in larger settings with distant friends. The EU and NATO should bind them all together, but deeper defence cooperation and integration of armed forces will have to be realised first in smaller clusters of recognised, trustworthy and reliable partners.

## CSDP: THERE IS SOMETHING THERE THAT WAS NOT THERE BEFORE

Jo COELMONT

Europe is facing two major, intertwined, crises. First, the financial and economic crises have led to a policy of austerity and to an inward-looking group of member states and European Union (EU). Second, the return of geopolitics has put Europe's neighbourhood in flames. After the crisis in Ukraine, and in particular after a series of remarkable (side) actions taken by Russia to harass specific European countries, the first reaction of Europeans was to lean on NATO. Yet, if the Union, as the world's leading trade power, is about the economy, it is also about international stability, security and indeed defence. Nevertheless, sharing 'CSDP fatigue' is apparently more fashionable than pooling efforts to ensure that the CSDP is upgraded. Still, we ought to keep in mind that all EU policies have been forged in crisis situations, especially after an initial *repli sur soi* generated sufficient frustration to seek more Union. As for the CSDP – which is in hibernation at the moment – there are now more than half a dozen things out there that were not there before, which constitute an urgent wake-up call.

'Events'. The major security crises we are witnessing at present are but symptoms of the new historical era we have just entered: one that is characterised by a major power shift. History teaches us that such an era goes hand-in-hand with a series of conflicts. It is no longer just about some 'events, dear boy, events', popping up in a system of crystallised international relations. This is the return of geopolitics, promising decades of turmoil and even war. History also teaches us that the only way out is ever more structured international cooperation. A return to a concert of 'sovereign' national states forging ad hoc coalitions along the road will generate no greater results (or catastrophes) than in the past. Today, dealing with geostrategic issues is the prerogative of countries the size of a continent or of political constructions representing a continent. Therefore 'towards an ever closer Union' no longer sounds like a religious psalm. It is a call for realism and a pragmatic approach to forge a unity of effort.

'The indispensable partner'. The US security strategy is characterised by its continuity. The recently published 2015 National Security Strategy, while pointing to 'power shifts; increasing interdependence; and ongoing power struggles in several regions' makes pretty clear the US ambition to remain the *primus inter pares*: militarily, politically and economically. It is also made clear that to that end the US needs to look for 'capable partners'. Europe is seen as 'the indispensable partner'. But the US call for partnerships stretches to countries and allies 'from Asia to



Europe'. The 2015 NSS further stipulates that the US 'is and will remain a Pacific power' and will continue to look at Asia as 'the' region offering in the future 'historic' opportunities, without ignoring 'the risk of escalating tensions in the Asia-Pacific'. With regard to Asia, the US is not pivoting but simply keeping its strategy in line with the new realities out there. After all, the world's economic centre of gravity is on the move, away from Europe. Still, Europeans may enjoy a privileged relationship with the US, however no longer a unique one.

NATO is still considered by the US as an instrument that contributes to its national security. Now that the Alliance is again focused on collective defence, the US has recently provided 'reassurance' as to its Article 5 commitment towards us Europeans (and indirectly towards its Asian partners). For collective defence, NATO is indispensable to the US and vital to Europeans.

As for crisis management, it is clear that the US will act, but selectively. The US has no intention of trying to solve all of the world's problems any longer. That goes for the Middle East, for Africa and even for some of Europe's problems. Through NATO the US is not only looking at European countries to participate in crisis management operations. Indeed, through its partnerships, the Alliance is offering a unique forum to forge interoperability with a series of countries from across the world. However, such a network of partnerships may well pave the way to systematically set up ad hoc coalitions outside NATO. This is not without precedent. Is NATO shifting from an Alliance to an instrument?

The main threat to EU member states is to lose NATO because of their weakness, individually and collectively, due to a (so far) persistent reluctance to forge a CSDP that is able to set up military operations autonomously and to effectively complement the Alliance in the more civilian aspects of crisis management.

'Frustration'. So far CSDP military operations, and civil missions for that matter, have but occasionally generated durable solutions. As for the military operations, on the ground the military objectives have been reached each and every time, which is quite unique in the world. However, the lack of a comprehensive approach, in particular the absence of an economic follow up once the military phase ended, explains the absence of lasting results. Regarding the more civilian or civil-military missions, in particular those oriented to security sector reform, they were generally limited to administering a homeopathic dose when actually the real stuff was needed, with the known results. Politically this gives the impression of a CSDP acting on the basis of a (well-intentioned) boy-scout approach as opposed to a comprehensive strategy. The net result is frustration all over.

Additional frustration stems from the fact that member states still remain unable to solve the commonly identified shortfalls in military capabilities, from not being able to develop an adequate cost sharing mechanism, and from the inability at the EU

level to act preventively because of the lack of planning capabilities and inadequate arrangements to set up an Headquarters.

At the time, shared frustrations about what happened – or did not happen – in Yugoslavia led to the European Security and Defence Policy. Later, member states, though politically divided over the war in Iraq, were united in common frustration at having no impact on events, and they thus created the CSDP. At present frustration of the same magnitude is rising, which calls for change.

‘Use of force’. A persistent lack of consensus among member states on the use of force is often invoked as a reason why considering any further development of the CSDP is pointless. However, convergence is underway. At first, for the so-called neutral, the CSDP has always been judged as being completely in line with their policy. These countries, with their experience in UN Blue Helmet operations, provided valuable contributions to CSDP operations right from the start. Germany, one of the big member states, in a relatively short timeframe has taken historical moves, from restricting their military to operate only in the framework of NATO’s Article 5 to taking part in crisis management operations in the context of NATO and the EU alike. At present, Germany is taking the lead in projects aimed at improving multinational defence cooperation through the Framework Nations Concept. Key in this concept is the assurance that when push comes to shove everyone will show up. All this to say that on conflict prevention, crisis management and peacebuilding – the *raison d’être* of CSDP – there is a growing consensus to see the military in given circumstances as ‘the’ catalyst for implementing a comprehensive approach to EU external action.

‘A process’. In 2012, after taking part in NATO’s Chicago summit, followed by the G10 and G20 meetings, the then President of the European Council, Herman Van Rompuy, took the initiative to put defence on the agenda of its meetings. The December 2013 European Council meeting can already now be qualified as a historic one for several reasons. For one thing, defence is now Chefsache. Top-down steering is henceforth to complement the bottom-up approach. Secondly, the Commission is on board. An important step to integrate the internal and external dimensions across the spectrum of security and defence has thus been taken. Together with the EDA, the Commission is to develop policies to support the European defence industry. As for dual-use systems, in the future the Commission may often be a customer among others. Specific programmes to address strategic capability shortfalls will henceforth be discussed at the level of Heads of State and Government. In short, a Defence Matters process has started. And in the EU process matters.

‘A strategy’. Moreover, the European Council introduced a remarkable novelty by tasking, albeit using rather opaque language, the High Representative with developing nothing less than a European Strategy on Security and Defence. The first steps to that end will be taken in June. A strategy may sound as an academic luxury, but it

is in the first place an organising principle. It matters, in particular in the area of security and defence. We know a strategy without capabilities to be but a hallucination. On the other hand, expecting to be able to gather the required capabilities without having a strategy is an illusion. The many white books, strategies or concepts on security and defence developed within countries and defence organisations, such as NATO, exist for a reason. At the EU level a strategy is needed to resolve the outstanding issues at the political-strategic, the operational and capabilities levels. As an organising principle a strategy is indispensable to do away with turf battles within and among the Commission, the External Action Service, the EDA and indeed member states. An EU strategy is in the first place about ensuring unity of effort at all times, for instance regardless if a crisis emerges in the East or in the South.

In preparing this June meeting of the European Council, the High Representative is said to favour a broad approach, looking beyond the CSDP. Rightly so, after all the CSDP is but one of the EU's foreign policy instruments, next to so many others ranging from humanitarian assistance, development, cyber, and energy to trade. For all these policies a strategy is to define: who is to do what, where, when and with what means. The question about the how was answered by the 2003 Security Strategy: comprehensively. In short, this strategy in the making is the unique instrument to ensure comprehensiveness. Comprehensiveness at last.

'Taboos'. Until recently, developing a security and defence strategy within the Union was rather taboo. Agreeing to disagree on strategy was considered wiser. From history we know that political taboos point to very sensitive and most important issues. Such a taboo may crystallise a status quo for long periods until its sudden death unleashes completely new policies. The reunification of Germany is a case in point. At the moment, talking about a European Army is still taboo, at least in some political circles. Is this just an illusion cherished by the few remaining diehard believers in the *finalité politique* of European integration – or is this a unique way to restore the sovereignty of the individual member states at a level consistent with the magnitude of the common problem to be resolved? Time will tell. However, either we will pragmatically and gradually forge more unity in European Defence, or, at a point in time, the sudden death of one the very last taboos in the Union will force us to adapt all at once – hopefully before any catastrophe has occurred.

The ingredients for making a CSDP fit for purpose are all out there. The first promising steps have already been taken. CSDP fatigue is doomed to evaporate rather soon.

# THE PROBLEM OF STRATEGIC PRIORITISATION

Alexander MATTELAER

Bob Dylan had it right: ‘the times, they are a-changin’’. For European defence planners, change has not been for the better. In fact, 2014 was a particularly troublesome year. Chaos in Libya gave way to outright civil war. In turn, the conflict in Syria created a vacuum in which the so-called ‘Islamic State’ could emerge and thrive. Last but perhaps most ominously, events in Ukraine have fundamentally altered the assumptions on which the European security order has been based since the end of the Cold War. Russian behaviour has effectively forced Europeans to start contemplating the unthinkable: a return of armed inter-state conflict on the European continent. Even as disorder is closing in from the South as well as from the East, security resources in many countries are still declining. Indeed, the dire state of public finances in many European states is not only calling into question the ability of states to meet their sovereign imperative – the defence of the nation –, but societal cohesion too. Austerity is breeding political radicalisation and fragmentation, but budgetary complacency now risks breeding even bigger problems in the future.

Faced with this geopolitical context, the critical question for governments and defence planners is how to reconcile these various geographical, financial and temporal dimensions into a credible strategy. Can one actually prioritise amongst the challenges posed by Russia in the East and the chaos in the South? Can one realistically avoid the stark choice between guns and butter? And finally, can one consciously sequence responses in the present and the future? In other words, the problem of strategic prioritisation has returned to Europe with a capital P.

National opinions on prioritisation differ starkly, but at the same time the geopolitical imperative from a European perspective is clear: the continent cannot turn its back on its own neighbourhood, be it in the East or the South. Whether it is Russian aircraft buzzing European airspace or desperate migrants trying to cross the Mediterranean, the troubles in the neighbourhood will not disappear as suddenly as they came about. In addition, neglecting the wider world carries significant risks over the longer term. All of this does not mean that the operational hubris of the crisis management era needs to be repeated. The lacklustre results of many stabilisation campaigns serve as a cautionary tale against overstressing military commitments. It does mean that without urgent consideration the defence of European interests cannot be taken for granted. Yet the ease with which many nations have disregarded the defence investment pledge undertaken at the NATO summit in Wales – especially as far as the direction of the trend is concerned – suggests that even territorial defence struggles to feature at the top of the political agenda, at least for now.

Trading space for time and time for political effect are classics in the strategic studies vocabulary. The European game of 'extend and pretend' with regard to sovereign debt servicing today constitutes the conceptual equivalent of defensive battles on the European plain. When struggling to achieve objectives, one effectively drags the opposing force into a geographic or temporal position from which they can be handled better. The point is to learn to think about geography and time as interlocking dimensions in strategic affairs. Such an analytical prism must be called for, because the combined set of challenges Europeans face over the coming years is truly kaleidoscopic. Armed forces need to be brought into a higher state of readiness; ready for expeditionary engagements of the 'train-and-assist' model, but also ready for actually defending Europe through means of deterrence – a task that had disappeared from the radar screen of an entire generation. The military challenge is but part of a larger scheme, as the threat of hybrid warfare links back to the notion of societal resilience. Like any other threat, insurgency and radicalisation will prey on perceived vulnerabilities. Reinforcing the armed forces thus needs to go hand-in-hand with a regeneration of societal structures. And critical taxpayers need to recognise their own interest – and that of their community as a whole – in the policy priorities that governments set.

Democratic polities always struggle with strategic prioritisation. This is the reason why central bankers as well as generals are typically endowed with a professional space in which they can exercise a relatively free hand. Democratic debate requires compromise and splitting the cake in such a way that it does not provoke a fight. The extensive bargaining this requires starkly contrasts with the behaviour of authoritarian polities that grab whatever they like. This very characteristic tends to give them the initial strategic advantage, only to be offset by eventual miscalculation in wartime or economic planning. What is clear is that in Europe central bankers are now assuming the role of first line responders when it comes to dealing with the internal challenges facing the continent. Meanwhile, European-level macro-economic coordination – with all the political bargaining this entails – is being stood up as the logical follow-on force. Keeping the Eurozone together in such a way that most Europeans can live with it has always been a geopolitical project and part and parcel of European integration. In many ways, the ongoing struggle over monetary and fiscal policy constitutes the key battleground in which the future of European cohesion and, more indirectly, the ability to resource modern armed forces will be decided.

Can we make some reasonably safe assumptions to guide defence planning efforts and shape investment priorities? Including both geographical and temporal parameters constitutes the analytical key here. The challenge posed by Russia in the East is immediate and fully developed in terms of capabilities and doctrine. It simply cannot be ignored unless one accepts the risk of a potentially significant loss of territory. At the same time, demographic parameters indicate that Russia is unlikely to remain a major threat over a generational time horizon.

The opposite is the case for the southern neighbourhood. The threat of state collapse is of course already with us, but this has not (yet) led to materially powerful adversaries. Groups such as Daesh prey eagerly on state weakness, but have yet to prove they constitute a viable alternative for governing expanding territories. At the same time, young and rapidly growing populations indicate that the tumult in the southern neighbourhood will continue over time, and may well increase and consolidate into a mature threat.

Last but not least, instability in the wider world is unlikely to go away. More distant flashpoints – for instance in East Asia – may exercise considerable influence on European prosperity and wellbeing. In the latter category, only one element is clear: conflict is always possible, but we have no reliable way of knowing when this may occur.

The planning implications of the scenarios mentioned above are reasonably clear. The European demand for defensive capabilities is set to increase considerably. The ideal force mix – in the past solely geared towards expeditionary crisis management – suddenly includes a need for heavy capabilities on land and a continued relevance of airpower (which may again have to be applied in contested environments). Over time, lighter forces for stabilisation contingencies will again be called for, while ‘train and assist’ and maritime patrol capabilities remain most useful as mitigation measures in the meantime. Faraway dramas may in turn call for force projection from the sea and the defence of maritime communication lines. As such, a broad spectrum of European force options will be called for. At the same time, political willingness to face the resourcing implications this entails is arguably contingent on even greater levels of urgency. As European capitals engage in strategic reviews on a national level and together negotiate new political guidance for defence planners, they would do well to keep all of these dimensions in mind. If time is running out, the prospect of ceding geographical space may not be far off.

# CSDP: WHAT IS IT GOOD FOR?

Sven BISCOP

Does anyone remember the original reason why the European, now Common, Security and Defence Policy (first ESDP, now CSDP) was created?

It was certainly not so that the European Union (EU) could have just one or two battlegroups on stand-by. Ever since the battlegroup scheme was launched, it has been a dominant theme in the deliberations on the CSDP. And it risks remaining so for a long time, for it presents a problem that cannot be solved. No matter how much the EU tries to perfect the scheme, the actual deployment of a battlegroup will always be a matter of coincidence: when a crisis occurs, does it fit the interests and political will, and the financial means, of the Member States whose forces happen to be on stand-by? Unless common funding is established and command authority over the battlegroups on stand-by is transferred to the Council, which could then decide on deployment by a majority vote, this is an insoluble conundrum. And thus the debate can go on and on – the perfect excuse not to have to talk about the actual objective of the CSDP.

At the inception of the CSDP, Member States were much more ambitious. ‘To develop an autonomous capacity to take decisions and, where NATO as a whole is not engaged, to launch and conduct EU-led military operations in response to international crises’: this was the purpose agreed upon by the European Council in Helsinki in 1999. The definition of the ‘Petersberg Tasks’ in the Treaty on European Union made clear that this included peace enforcement, i.e. war, alongside classic peacekeeping, military assistance, evacuation, and humanitarian support. To this end, the European Council defined the Headline Goal: the ambition to deploy up to a corps-size formation (50,000 to 60,000 troops), within one or two months, and to sustain it for at least one year. However, the Headline Goal was last heard of during the 2008 French EU Presidency and has been completely overshadowed by the battlegroups. But even if the battlegroup scheme worked as desired, would that really greatly increase the EU’s capacity to act? In which of the crises going on at the time of writing (Ukraine, Syria, Iraq, Libya, Mali...) would deploying a battalion-size battlegroup make a difference?

Clearly, the original *raison d’être* of the CSDP needs to be brought back to the attention of today’s political, diplomatic and military decision-makers.

Unfortunately, ambiguity about the *raison d’être* was precisely the mechanism that made the CSDP possible in the first place. The CSDP is a Franco-British creation (something which the latter need to be reminded of more than the former). In 1998,

at their annual bilateral meeting, held that year in St. Malo, the UK and France agreed to try and stimulate capability development by launching a European scheme. For Britain, the primary framework in which strategy would be set and decisions made on when and where to use those capabilities remained NATO. France believed that European capability development should also lead to autonomous European operations, outside the framework of NATO.

Rather than eventually resolving itself, that fundamental ambiguity has continued to handicap the CSDP, which has never enjoyed the full support of all Member States. The end result is that it has never reached its full potential in either dimension: capability development or operations.

An elaborate process was conceived to fulfil the Headline Goal, and the European Defence Agency (EDA) was set up to urge Member States to invest in collective solutions for the priority shortfalls. But by depriving the EDA of the budget to initiate projects itself, capitals have ensured that capability development remains an almost entirely bottom-up process, nearly completely reliant on national initiative and hence protective of national industrial interests. Even so, the CSDP remains the most promising avenue for collective European capability development. The European Commission can be increasingly involved, certainly in research but even in actual (dual-use) projects. Today though that promise is evident more because nations' performance in other frameworks is even more meagre than because of the CSDP's own achievements. Collective capability development has never been NATO's forte. Instead, the NATO Defence Planning Process (NDPP) generates national targets, while the organisation's Smart Defence initiative never really took off. Pooling and Sharing between Member States in regional clusters complements but cannot replace the EDA's efforts, for no cluster can achieve the critical mass required to develop strategic enablers. EDA projects have started (on air-to-air refuelling, satellite communication, drones and cyber defence), but for these to produce new platforms and more capability, many more Member States will have to invest a lot more money – and these are just some of the priority shortfalls.

Elaborate institutions were also established to allow the EU to launch military operations and civilian missions – but not an operational headquarters, hence command and control of the military operations has to be outsourced to either NATO or a Member State. Nor has the EU been endowed with even sufficient planning capacity for the permanent prudent planning that would be needed to translate excellent intelligence and awareness into policy options for the full range of EU external action, civilian and military. The result is a decision-making structure that certainly works for operations planned long in advance and even, if Member States want it to, for rapid reaction. But that structure's lack of planning capacity means that it is not in itself systematically proactive enough to make the EU the platform of choice for addressing urgent security crises. Indeed, when force has to be used, Member



States, even those who regularly stress that the CSDP covers the full spectrum of military operations, rarely choose to deploy under the EU flag, but systematically opt for NATO or coalitions of the willing when fighting is expected.

In the end, it boils down again to the issue of the *raison d'être*: What do the nations of Europe really want to be able to do in security and defence? And how much of that do they want to do through the CSDP?

While Europeans themselves may remain undecided, the United States does not. Seen from Washington, there is only one potential strategic competitor for the US: China. Hence the 'pivot' of American strategy. That pivot hinges on Europe: the more Europeans can take care of their own business, the more confidently the US can focus on Asia. And there is no want of business, as both Europe's eastern and southern neighbourhood are in turmoil. Therefore the US does not only want Europeans to contribute to conventional deterrence under NATO's Article 5 and to American-led crisis management operations. In non-Article 5 scenarios around Europe, Washington expects Europeans themselves to initiate and lead crisis management in their periphery, preferably at an early stage, when a crisis has not yet escalated and can still be contained without relying too heavily on American assets. In other words, those Member States that are still seeking to please the US by curbing the development of the CSDP would be well advised to note that Washington is now actively promoting at least regional European strategic autonomy, i.e. crisis management without the US in Europe's own neighbourhood. Under which flag they do it, the US does not care, as long as they do it. So whether it be NATO, the CSDP or an ad hoc coalition that takes charge, it will increasingly have to be Europeans who take the initiative.

The strategic situation thus ought to compel Europeans to revive their original ambition for autonomy and to reassess the role of the various foundations of the European security architecture: the EU and its CSDP, NATO, and the nations. Ultimately there is only one security architecture and the issue is not which part of it does what, but whether what has to be done gets done, with maximum effectiveness and efficiency.

The EU is best placed to answer the big strategic question: which responsibilities does Europe want to assume as a security actor outside its borders? For that is a function of overall foreign policy, including trade, development and diplomacy as well as defence, which only the EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), in close coordination with the Commission, covers in a comprehensive manner. This much is certain: Europeans must take the lead in stabilising their own broad neighbourhood, stretching out into the Sahel and the Horn of Africa, and even the Gulf, and into the Caucasus and perhaps Central Asia – for if they do not, nobody else is likely to do it for them. That includes their maritime borders, but as a global trading power Europe must also contribute to global maritime security, notably in Asia. And

as a defender of a rules-based international order, it must contribute when the United Nations decide to act if the rules are broken.

For the same reason – the comprehensiveness of its external action – the EU ought to be the default platform for crisis management in an actual contingency: to assess what is happening, to decide how important it is, to settle what has to be done, and to forge the coalition that can do it. When military action is decided upon, parts of the NATO command structure will often be called for to conduct the operation.

The military capabilities which these responsibilities for autonomous non-Article 5 scenarios require should also be defined by the EU. The CSDP mechanisms are more than fit for that purpose. At the very least, Europeans ought to be able to achieve the Headline Goal autonomously within their neighbourhood, i.e. to be able to deploy up to a corps relying on European enablers only. For most Member States this implies revising upwards their national targets as to how many troops they want to be capable of deploying and sustaining. Why is it that so many capitals seem capable of thinking only in terms of projecting companies instead of battalions? Those companies will not suffice to generate a corps.

This European level of ambition for autonomous action should be incorporated into the NDPP, so that a capability mix can be designed that will allow the European allies and partners / EU Member States to meet both their collective defence obligations and their expeditionary requirements. These capabilities can then be developed and acquired through collective European projects under the aegis of the EDA (certainly for the strategic enablers, which will be a welcome boost for the European defence industry) in combination with radical pooling of assets in regional clusters so as to eliminate all redundancies. Ensuring operability among Europeans and between European and other Allies and partners through manoeuvres is again a task for NATO.

Finally, NATO's collective defence of course remains the ultimate guarantee of Europe's security. But it should be seen as such: an ultimate guarantee. Before considering what reassurance they can seek from the US, Europeans ought first to think of what contribution they want to make to global security. All of this will require a profound strategic debate among Europeans. But the world will not stop while they deliberate. Ultimately, the *raison d'être* of the European security architecture and of the CSDP in particular is not its ability to talk about security, but to deliver security.

# CONCLUSION – ... WHEREFORE ART THOU CSDP?

Daniel FLOTT

*'What's in a name?'* ... So much of what we consider the CSDP to be and mean today requires serious reflection. Just take a moment to think about the following concepts: 'Petersberg Tasks', 'Permanent Structured Cooperation', 'EU Battle-groups', 'European Security Strategy'. Do any of these words have any continued resonance when one thinks of the security challenges Europe faces today? Such words seem like relics of a past golden age when unfaltering economic growth led Europeans to believe that security meant simply conducting 'social work' in far-off lands. Europeans were rich, and they acted rich too. *'A fool's paradise'*. Yet it is not just that European governments have failed to live up to the lofty ambitions of St. Malo, it is that those ambitions increasingly seem at odds with reality. The crisis management paradigm, as has been aptly pointed out by many experts in this series and beyond, is in staggering decline; one only need look at the number, type and scope of crisis operations being launched under CSDP or NATO today to see this fact. Bar the operations launched by the French in recent years – a mainly national affair –, eyes have turned to deterrence: the real meaning of the word 'defence', or at least where defence begins.

*'A plague o'both your houses!'* Russia's actions in Ukraine and Eastern Europe have rightfully concentrated the minds of European governments. Since the Wales Summit there is agreement that the Alliance is the only game in town as far as Europe's deterrence against Russia goes. Alliance members are responding. In some quarters defence spending is being increased, albeit from very low levels, and a number of states have been quick to bolster NATO's presence in the East with tangible military assets. NATO is not perfect but it is the only meaningful tool in the West's arsenal that, at least in military terms, Putin is likely to take seriously. For its part, the EU has – for now at least – remained united through sanctions. Russia has ensured that the luxury of bickering over different institutional settings for security makes little sense at a time when the only objective for Europe is to remain united; and, yes, at all costs. Indeed, Europe's continued imperviousness to Putin's charms is vital. Yet with all this emphasis on the East, the South is left exposed. Libya is a mess. The Mediterranean continues to be a tragic grave for many daring to scramble to Europe. Syria and Iraq fester. Daesh have filled the vacuum. *'For never was a story of more woe than this...'* Ask yourself, is CSDP – in its current state – a serious response to such challenges?

Institutional design, low-key military operations and strategy documents are all worthy endeavours but not if they serve to mask the serious work of ensuring that the member states of both CSDP and NATO are capable of meeting their ultimate

sovereign responsibility: put simply, defending the nation. For let us be frank, what is at stake here is the vitality of European states. Step back from the institutional milieu and focus on the building blocks of any successful alliance or community: its members. In many pivotal countries spending is in decline or, at best, stagnant. Resources remain key. Yet the question of prioritisation is also important. Indeed, are we even sure that CSDP and NATO member states are properly geared up for deterrence when for years they have modernised their forces with crisis management operations in mind. Deterrence and territorial defence come first and are absolute. In a sense, Europe has a bunch of 'crisis management forces', and not overly effective ones either. Ensuring that Europe's militaries can do both crisis management and deterrence – simultaneously if need be – is the ultimate goal, but it will take some time before this is achieved.

Why is it necessary to question the foundation of CSDP? Well, from Russia to Daesh Europe is increasingly aware – or it should be! – that security threats are everywhere and they take on different characteristics. Neither NATO nor the CSDP alone are able to deal with all of the challenges Europe faces. Daesh raise issues of home-grown terrorism and radicalisation, which immediately makes Europe's police forces, intelligence agencies and (if preventive measures are thrown into the pot) teachers and parents part of the solution. Russia is using propaganda, nationalist pleas, cyber warfare, etc. to accompany its military strategy in Ukraine. Again, a military response is part of an overall mix involving a range of actors and instruments. Neither Russian aggression nor terrorism are new problems of course, but it is Europe's ability in dealing with them comprehensively that is of concern.

Think about what the EU means by the 'comprehensive approach'. It has come to mean that the EU should respond to crisis situations in third-countries with all of its available means; used, of course, in an intelligent manner. The EU does indeed need a comprehensive approach but it must be geared for defence writ large. A comprehensive approach, yes, but not just for crisis management, for deterrence too. Under the crisis management paradigm the comprehensive approach is supposed to bring stability to a country or region; under a deterrence paradigm a comprehensive approach must be about giving the Kremlin cause to alter its calculations vis-à-vis Ukraine and Eastern Europe. Under a deterrence paradigm a comprehensive approach puts military capabilities centre-stage but brings intelligence, energy security, foreign investment controls, critical transport infrastructure, etc. into the fold. Far from grand utopian schemes such as an 'EU Army', the EU needs to use its existing infrastructure for deterrence purposes. In the future CSDP should not be thought of simply in terms of its crisis management operations, for defence means so much more than this.

This sort of comprehensive approach begins with recognition of the fact that defence is not just some niche area of government policy; it is the fundamental basis for our

very existence. In this sense, defence and the deterrence paradigm should be rooted in the EU's internal market structures, its economic resources should be leveraged to this end, and the ingenuity of its citizens and the added-value of individual member states should be prioritised. CSDP needs to be the forum where Europeans think outside of the box on defence. Why not then use the EU budget for investment in Europe's critical defence infrastructure? Why not identify those seaports, airfields, roads and railways that are crucial to Europe's security and restore them? And yes, however controversial, for NATO forces to use too. Think of the scrutiny Greece's government is under now, but what is being done to monitor those EU member states where Moscow holds sizeable investments? Why not think about using the experiences of EU naval operations off of the Horn of Africa for the problems facing Europe's frontier states in the Mediterranean?

Of course, such ideas are dependent on the political will of the member states. The UK contributions in this series called for British leadership, but this only really looks likely under the NATO umbrella given the impending general election, EU referendum and decreasing budgetary resources. France, which initially saw the CSDP as a power multiplier and as a means of achieving autonomy from the United States, sees the lack of progress in CSDP as damaging to French interests. Pragmatism is the watchword in Paris, even though France is still investing in defence and fighting many of Europe's wars abroad. Despite recent messages from the German political elite that it wants to play a more central role in security and defence, Germany's vision for the CSDP remains at odds with the UK and France; as does its view of military power more broadly.

As the ideological backbone of the CSDP, countries such as Belgium, Italy and Spain have supported successive steps in the development of the Policy but belief in the CSDP is not enough. For Belgium, resources are not keeping pace with its ambitions and security needs. For Italy, the number of security and economic challenges facing the country today means that its quest for 'More Europe on Defence' will be strained if the CSDP does not meet the security demands of the Italian population, especially in the Mediterranean Sea. Spain faces a similar situation. Even though CSDP has been the acceptable face of Spanish defence in the eyes of its population, the economic crisis in the country has brought about a degree of pessimism about Europe. Madrid has always seen CSDP as being part and parcel of ever-closer union, but, while the country has played its part in all CSDP missions to date, there is a growing feeling that the Policy may well be ill-suited to Spain's current security challenges. For Greece, with Turkey at its borders and the economic crisis, the feeling is similar.

For Poland, Russia's actions in Ukraine have vindicated years of support for NATO. Warsaw feels that the CSDP is only useful in so far as it helps EU member states to remain operationally engaged, financially committed and serious about an inclusive defence sector. The Netherlands has committed itself to the CSDP but is realistic

about what the Policy can achieve for Dutch interests. Amsterdam sees a role for the CSDP but it must be part of a comprehensive approach to EU foreign policy and not work against NATO. The same holds true for Portugal, which has also made it clear that CSDP must not work to the detriment of NATO or Portugal's relationship with the United States. Lithuania is in a similar boat. However, for Sweden and the Czech Republic things are less clear-cut. Prague has never really led a proper debate on foreign policy objectives since independence, and while Sweden is more advanced in its national debate it has still to confront its neutrality. Malta faces similar questions over its neutrality. Denmark, while a ready and capable nation, is for the foreseeable outside of the CSDP.

*'Wisely and slow; they stumble that run fast...'* yet not running at all is not an option either. Europe is still in the eye of an economic maelstrom. Resources are running thin. Europe is poor, and it is acting poor too. America grows impatient. *'A fool's paradise'*. It is hard not to be pessimistic. *'Sad hours seem long'*. Yet there might be hope on the horizon. However timidly, states are cooperating on defence. Some are even spending more. While the point of this series has not been to provide policy recommendations, some of the individual contributions give cause for optimism and point to areas that can be further exploited. The CSDP embodies some genuinely important achievements, but it has become the victim of historical change. No single European Council will solve the problem of defence in Europe, yet the time is ripe for the Council to recast the CSDP.

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